

# SAINT PAULS.

---

JANUARY, 1868.

---

## ALL FOR GREED.

---

### CHAPTER XI.

#### MADemoiselle FÉLICIE'S HUSBAND.

THE "fortnight" which Monsieur de Vêrancour had begged from De Champmorin's notary was past, and another week added to it, and still there was no news of the money, and the suspense endured by the unfortunate Vicomte was becoming intolerable; and various slight signs were here and there appearing of Mademoiselle Félicie's matrimonial defeat being likely to stand revealed to the general public. It was really beyond bearing! And the worst of it was, that it was impossible not to be grateful to poor, good, patiently-toiling Monsieur Richard for the manifest trouble he was taking. He never totally deprived the sorely perplexed father of hope, never announced to him the failure of his negotiations, or put himself in the position of a man who had done his utmost and could do no more; but, on the contrary, played with his solicitor after the most tantalising fashion, and was for ever showing him a chance of the attainment of their ends. Their ends!—for of his zeal in the cause of the family, Monsieur Richard left no doubt. And the Vicomte felt it was the "family," the house of Vêrancour, which was being served;—and that was as it should be. It would have been presumptuous in Monsieur Richard to have tried to render a service to the Vicomte, out of personal friendship; whereas, besides being convenient, it was creditable to a man like Richard Pré-vost to wish so ardently to serve the interests of an illustrious race. And from the point of view of "ma maison," as Monsieur le Vicomte would perpetually repeat to himself, it was gratifying to observe the plebeian's devotion, while it did away with the necessity for any personal gratitude, which was also pleasing.

Such was Monsieur Richard's desire to obtain for his noble patron the sum required for the establishment of Mademoiselle Félicie, that

he was for ever acquainting him with some new plan that his untiring ingenuity had devised, and that must be certain to succeed;—only just in the teeth of this “certainty,” something of the most impossible kind invariably occurred which dashed all the seemingly so well-founded hopes to the ground. There was only one simple operation that Monsieur Richard never proposed; and that was to dispose of any securities of his own at a great loss, and bring the proceeds to the Vicomte. No! it was always a question of “raising” the money from some one else, and in this transaction Monsieur Richard was doomed to perpetual disappointment. As to buying the “Grandes Bruyères,” as his uncle had been ready to do, that was utterly out of the question. Monsieur Richard had no ready money; everything was absorbed by this purchase of the Châteaubréville estate.

“It is a very heavy responsibility,” said Monsieur Richard, one evening when he was sitting with the family at the Château, round the smouldering fire, “a very heavy responsibility;” and he sighed, and ventured to take up Vévette’s scissors from the table and examine them attentively.

Monsieur de Vérancour placed his two hands on his knees, bending forwards, and looking intently at the toes of his thick boots. “Well!” rejoined he, with a kind of grunt, “I confess it passes me to make out why you have done it. I should call it a terrible imprudence. To go and saddle yourself with land,—with a very considerable landed property indeed!—when nothing obliges you to do so. I confess that goes beyond me;” and the Vicomte threw himself back in his chair as if he gave the problem up in despair. “That we,” continued he, after a momentary pause, “should go on impoverishing ourselves to keep up old historic memories, and prevent the glorious sound of old names from being lost in the horrid roar of Revolutions,—that is comprehensible; it is one of the many sacrifices to which our noblesse obliges us. And how many are there of us who can do it, even? Not one in a hundred. We, who are identical with the soil, we are forced to sell it.”

“Perhaps,” suggested timidly Monsieur Richard, “perhaps that is why we buy it.”

But the Vicomte did not seem at all impressed by the force of this argument; for, unheeding the interruption, he continued, “You people of the new school, you nouveaux riches, are so completely free! Nothing trammels or binds you. You can absolutely do whatever you choose; you have nothing to keep up—no traditions, no names, no ancestors who have a right to expect from you the sacrifice of all mere worldly advantages to the respect for their dignity. We are trammelled, fettered, chained down on all sides, whilst you are free as air. And yet you are always seeking to forge some chain for yourselves. Land, forsooth! land! that it is with which you nouveaux riches are always burdening yourselves.”

"It is possible," edged in meekly Monsieur Richard, "that we may wish to found something."

"Found what?" exclaimed the Vicomte, with truly superb disdain. "It takes ages to found an order in the state. Nobody founded us. We were! What was the use of putting us down? Found, indeed! I should like to know what the men of to-day, the men without names, can found?"

"Not an old nobility, certainly," replied Monsieur Richard gently, and with a smile, "but perhaps a new aristocracy."

"Whew!" half whistled Monsieur de Verancour, with a supremely contemptuous curl of the lip. "That takes four generations at least, and heaps of money!" And, getting up and standing with his back to the fire, he continued, "Why, now, look at what you're doing. When you've bought and paid for the Châteaubréville property, you'll have to put it in order, and restore the house,—it's shockingly out of repair,—and furnish it."

"There's a great deal of splendid old furniture in it," interrupted Richard Prévost.

"Yes; but old—very old," retorted the Vicomte; "out of keeping with the habits of modern——" he seemed at a loss for a proper term, "of modern——" he hesitated again.

"You mean out of keeping with the habits of la petite bourgeoisie," said Richard, coming to his assistance. "But, Monsieur le Vicomte," added he, "I intend to furnish, and I hope keep up Châteaubréville on a scale not quite unfitting the importance of the place."

"The deuce you do, my dear fellow. Why, then, you'll not be able to do it under a hundred thousand francs a year."

"I do not count upon doing it for so little," answered humbly Monsieur Richard.

"Peste!" ejaculated Monsieur de Verancour, and the look which accompanied the expression seemed to say, "Where have these canaille stolen all this gold?"

A hundred thousand francs of income! Oh, the magic of those few words! Mademoiselle Félicie let her tapestry drop upon her lap, and surveyed poor Monsieur Richard from under her eyelids with such a strange look, but a gracious one decidedly.

"Diable!" pursued the Vicomte. "Well, then, you may make a marriage,—a good marriage; it will be in your power to marry a well-born girl without a fortune."

"If you would help—would guide me," murmured Richard.

"I know of none such," retorted the Vicomte haughtily; "but I know that in Paris, for instance, there are plenty of reduced families who will give their daughters to anybody who is rich. It is quite a thing of the present day, quite a new thing in France. It has been for nearly two centuries the practice to renovate the lustre of ancient names by marrying the eldest sons of illustrious houses to large

fortunes embodied in base-born girls. There you have the "*savonnette à vilain*" of the Regency and of Louis XV., but it is only recently that nobly-born girls have been sacrificed to become the mothers of shopkeepers. However, so it is now, and certain it is that money can do anything. Therefore, my dear Monsieur Richard, as I said before, if you have a hundred thousand francs a year to spend, I do not see why you should not marry a wife whom the ladies of the province should visit."

Monsieur Richard bowed low and deferentially, as though he felt the full value of the announcement made to him, and nothing in his manner indicated that he was other than flattered by the Vicomte's behaviour; for, in truth, the Vicomte meant to be particularly kind, affable, and condescending, patronising, nay,—even paternal.

Mademoiselle Félicie, by reason of the thirty years' difference of age between herself and her father, saw things in a slightly different light, and was just capable of understanding that Monsieur Richard might be anything but flattered by her parent's naively contemptuous familiarity; and when their visitor rose to go, she proceeded to a small side-table in the half-lighted drawing-room and asked him if he would not take a glass of *eau sucrée*. Upon his acceptance of that favour, she mixed the harmless beverage for him herself, tendered it to him, and as she did so, allowed her white hand unconsciously to touch his, lingered for a few seconds ere she relinquished her hold upon the glass, and with a perfectly angelic look asked Monsieur Richard if he were quite sure there was sugar enough in the water.

And then another week went by, and it seemed somehow or other to be becoming known that Mademoiselle Félicie would not marry Monsieur de Champmorin. How it had transpired, no one could say; but it was thought to be traceable to the Champmorin notary, who in moments of effusion and confidential talk with trusted friends, had discoursed upon the impossibility of girls marrying without money, and had unguardedly alluded to his client as "much to be pitied"—insinuating, as it were, that Mademoiselle Félicie,—having been fallen in love with, unprovided as she was with any dot,—could not be held altogether blameless.

Richard Prévost abstained for three days from going near the Château. On the fourth Monsieur de Vêrancour sought him. Monsieur Richard was warming himself before a huge, blazing fire in his study, when a loud ring was heard at the door bell, a loud footstep quickly followed it in the hall, and dispensing with Madame Jean's attendance, Monsieur le Vicomte opened the door for himself, and stalked into the room.

"Well, there it is at last!" he exclaimed, throwing himself into a chair and letting his brown felt hat drop on the floor beside him. "I always thought it would come to this with all these confounded delays; and now there it is! S— mille tonnerres de Dieu!" And



all those good principles which were to keep this "right-thinking" fils des croisés from swearing, flew to the winds, and he indulged in the comfort of a string of oaths, as if he had been no more than one of those long-forgotten Saulnier forefathers of his, picking up salt in the Breton marshes.

"I beseech of you," entreated Monsieur Richard, rising, "do not give up hope. I have, on the contrary, good news. I should have gone to see you last evening if the weather had not been so bad and my cough troublesome, but I was going down to the Château now. I have a letter from an old friend of my poor uncle's in Nantes, and I am positively not without hopes that perhaps even a sale of Les Grandes Bruyères might be possible. Here, I will read you the letter. I got it yesterday." And Monsieur Richard began busily throwing over the letters and papers before him.

"The devil take your letter!" stormed the Vicomte; "what do all the letters in the world matter now? Why, Champmorin refuses!" And striding up to the table, Monsieur de Vêrancour brought down his hand upon it with a heavy thump, and the two men looked each other in the face.

"Re—fu—ses!" stammered out Richard Prévost. "Oh! Monsieur le Vicomte, I am constrained to say I cannot master the sense of those words. Monsieur de Champmorin refuses the honour of being the husband of Mademoiselle de Vêrancour!"

The exasperated parent was somewhat mollified at sight of Monsieur Richard's indignation. "Read that," said he, handing over a letter to him.

Monsieur Richard did read, and was seemingly overpowered by what he read, for his countenance was thoroughly what his countrymen term "bouleversé" when he returned the paper to its owner.

"You will admit," observed the latter, "that nothing is left for me to do. It is as complete a congé as can well be given, and, moreover, couched in such respectful and mournful terms that probably public opinion would expect me to condole with the writer."

Richard Prévost took the letter back into his hand, pored over it anew, and then replied with an air and in a tone of supreme depression.

"No!" he sighed, as though vanquished by fate, "there is nothing left to do,—nothing!"

Monsieur de Vêrancour sprang from his seat, and paced up and down the room. "Nothing!" echoed he, with stentorian lungs; "that is exactly what drives me mad! I feel ready to shoot myself because I have no earthly pretext for shooting Champmorin!"

"Good God!" exclaimed Richard Prévost in a tone of downright agony, "to think of such a thing! A demoiselle de Vêrancour refused by a mere country gentleman! Refused! Such a person as Mademoiselle Félicie!—such birth and position!—such a name!"

The Vicomte went on pacing up and down and muttering, and Monsieur Richard went on watching him without being noticed.

"One thing must at all events be seen to," ejaculated Richard, as though struck by a sudden inspiration. "The whole must be kept secret; it must never be known that——"

"Not known!" thundered the Vicomte. "Well, my good sir, one sees what it is to live out of the world as you do! Why, it is known already. Everybody knows it. It was known before it was true! These things always are!"

"So that," groaned Monsieur Richard, "it will be public throughout the province that Mademoiselle Félicie—Ma-de-moi-selle Félicie,"—and he weighed on every syllable solemnly,—“will have been given up, discarded, refused! It is too dreadful!” “Can nothing be done?” recommenced Monsieur Richard, with a kind of timid eagerness, after a silence of a few moments.

"What?" rejoined Monsieur de Vêrancour.

"Indeed, it is hard to say," rejoined the other sadly; "but surely it would be possible to find some remedy. Anything would be preferable to the present position."

"I should think it would, indeed!" retorted bitterly Monsieur de Vêrancour.

"Well, but—" suggested hesitatingly Monsieur Richard, "could no other parti be found?"

"Where?" cried the Vicomte. "Do you fancy, my worthy Monsieur Richard, that husbands for discarded young ladies are to be found by beating the woods for them, and that they come as snakes do when they smell the catcher's pot of boiling milk? No, thank you! No dot, no husband! Where is there one anywhere round? Look through the department. Why, there's not even an old invalid, wanting a nurse,—not even a *mésalliance* to be got!"

Monsieur Richard fell to musing, and the Vicomte went on walking up and down, but he did seem comforted by the talk he was having. "Monsieur le Vicomte," at length said, in a low and unsteady tone, Richard Prévost; "there is a *mésalliance*, if Mademoiselle Félicie would consent to that. I know of one—a very—an extremely rich parti."

"The devil you do!" broke in Monsieur de Vêrancour, stopping short in his walk. "Where is he to be found? Who is he?" Richard Prévost was pale as a ghost, so pale that the edge of his eyelids seemed quite pink, as he looked hesitatingly at his interlocutor. "Well!" exclaimed the latter, "where is he? who is he?"

"It is me, myself!" gasped out Monsieur Richard, under his breath. The stare of blank astonishment with amusement mixed, with which his proposal was met, was not likely to be ever forgotten by the unlucky suitor, whose white face turned scarlet with shame.

\* In Poitou it is a trade to catch snakes, and the catchers attract them by boiling milk.

"You?" echoed Monsieur de Vêrancour. "You?" And then struggling with the strong sense of the ridiculous, "You?" he shouted a third time. The apparent fun of the thing fairly mastered him, and he roared with laughter, as he threw himself into the nearest chair, and held his sides.

The Vicomte's fit of hilarity lasted long enough for Monsieur Richard to determine upon what attitude he should assume. He assumed one of injured dignity, and reminded his hearer, when he was able to attend to him, that he was exceedingly rich, and that his offer was a proof of his devotion to the house of Vêrancour.

Conversation was not easy after this incident, and so the Vicomte soon prepared to take his leave. When he did so, he held out his hand to Monsieur Richard, and spoke again to his young friend with his features not yet quit of the laugh that had convulsed them. "There shall be no rancour about it!" said he, with jovial graciousness. "I am sure you meant it well, but you know it really was too droll. I ought to apologise for laughing so immoderately, but, on my honour, it was irresistible. However, I shan't forget the intention, and, I assure you, you have done me good; it has been quite a distraction." And, with a good-humoured shake of the hand, he left the room and the house, and once in the street, had another laugh to himself.

Whether Monsieur de Vêrancour would have altogether liked the look with which Monsieur Richard followed him when his back was turned, is another question.

---

## CHAPTER XII.

### RAOUL'S DISTRESS.

Just before the end of October a little incident had occurred which had frightened D—— "from its propriety," and afforded the old cronies of the place an opportunity for declaring that the end of the world was coming. It had become known that Monsieur Léon Duprez, that most magnificent "cock of the walk," whose example, said the elders, was so disastrous for the younger generation, had sailed for Australia, under a feigned name, thus escaping at once from his debtors and his admiring townsfolk, from his colleagues on various Boards, and from Madame Josephine Le Vaillant, the wife of the Juge de Paix. Naturally this was "un évènement," and, what with one thing and another, the little town of D—— did appear to be aping its betters, and losing all right to be denominated a "quiet retreat."

In the course of time,—that is, towards the first days of November,—what are termed "proceedings" were taken against Monsieur Duprez's property, and his house and furniture were to be put up for sale; though the reports of what his debts in Paris amounted to made

any price that might be reached by the disposal of his paternal estate seem a mere "drop in the ocean."

All this really was very agitating for the public mind of D—. Here, in less than a month, had there been a murder, a financial break-up,—or, as the commentators delighted to call it, a "scandal,"—and a matrimonial alliance broken off!

In the midst of such exciting events the fact that Raoul de Morville was going up to Paris to be a clerk in the Marine Ministry, passed unnoticed. And, above all, it entered no one's head that there could be any possible connection between his acceptance of official drudgery in a subordinate position and the ruin of the some-time cock of the walk who had been his intimate friend.

Old Morville spoke but little with his neighbours, but to the few whom he met he grunted out the announcement of his son's approaching departure, and received a most humiliating meed of pity in exchange; for, being universally disliked, pity seemed the natural vexation to inflict upon him, and he got plenty of it.

Raoul came to say good-bye to his friends at the Château, and found the Vicomte together with his two daughters.

"I'm sincerely rejoiced you came to-day instead of to-morrow," said Monsieur de Vêrancour.

"I go to-morrow," interrupted Raoul.

"If you would let me finish, I meant to say that to-morrow you would have found no one here," continued the Vicomte; "for we have to drive over to the Grandes Bruyères, and shall be away the whole day, and I would not have missed seeing you for a great deal, *mon garçon*. I shall always feel a real interest in you, for you put us all in mind of happier times,—of the times when your mother and theirs,"—pointing to his daughters,—"*were both alive*. I shall be heartily glad to hear of your well-doing, and of your advancement."

At the moment when Monsieur de Vêrancour had mentioned the journey of the next day to the Grandes Bruyères, a glance, quick as lightning, was exchanged between Raoul and Vêvette, who was seated somewhat behind her father. It was only the work of one second, for the girl lowered her eyes instantly to her work, and blushed crimson.

The leave-taking, when it came, was an affectionate one, and while the two young ladies shook hands cordially with their parting guest, the Vicomte embraced him with genuine tenderness, and specially enjoined upon him to write to them from Paris.

It is, probably, needless to inform my readers that, the next day, only Félicie accompanied her father upon the projected excursion. Vêvette discovered an excuse for remaining at home, and at home she stayed, and was virtually alone in the house. Céleste, the all-pervading functionary, was at all times too glad not to be summoned from her lawful dominions in the vast subterranean kitchens of the once grand

old dwelling, and from her Vévette knew she was safe. Baptiste, the "man of all work," was absent with the carriage, and had put on his old livery to look like a coachman; his wife, old Suzette, who was the most dangerous person of the lot, was weeding in the garden, and doing some work set out for her by her spouse in the artichoke beds. She was not to be got rid of, or eluded; that Vévette well knew, for Suzette was a lynx-eyed old woman, and, moreover, her employment fixed her right opposite the pavilion. Nothing was left for it then but to receive Raoul inside the house. It was for the last time, and Vévette, after a great deal of discussion with herself, and with much of what she believed to be resistance, yielded.

Raoul waited behind some trees just outside the garden wall to the south,—in a spot which no one ever passed. About three o'clock Vévette came, and gave him a signal; he climbed the wall, followed the girl silently, and in a few seconds was alone with her in the usual sitting-room of the family.

Mute and mournful were the first greetings of the pair; but, in the midst of what was the natural grief attendant on their parting, it seemed as though some other trouble lay hidden, and each marked this in the other. As Raoul held in his the hand of the shrinking girl, "Vévette," he exclaimed, bitterly, "why do you shrink from me in this way? what is it you shrink from?" Vévette cast an anxious glance around her. Raoul shook his head: "It is not that!" he said impatiently. "You are not alarmed lest we should be surprised; you know that no one will come near this room for hours; that we are perfectly safe; that there are half-a-dozen ways of escaping if one heard but a mouse stir. No; that is not it. I am not deceived by the look that you send wandering out from your eyes all around us, for I see the look that lies behind it. What is it, Vévette? what is it? Sometimes it seems to me as though there were a phantom, a dreadful something, that would always rise up between us, even when we are man and wife." And he tried to draw her close to him, but she still shrank and trembled. "Vévette!" he urged in a softer tone, pressing her hand in both his own. "I am going. We may not meet for months. It is the last time we can speak together, the very last time; I have but one hope, but one comfort in the world,—your love. Do you look upon your promise to me as a sacred one?"

A faint "Yes," escaped her lips.

"Do you count upon mine to you as absolutely as though I had solemnly pledged you my faith at the altar?"

This time the girl looked up, and looked straight and unabashed into her lover's eyes, as she answered distinctly, "Oh! that indeed I do."

"Then, Vévette, my own love," he rejoined, throwing his arms impetuously round her, "what can it be that you fear? For God's

sake, tell me. Do not let me go with this weight upon my heart. What is it that you dread, my wife, my surely to be wedded wife?"

"Oh! Raoul! Raoul!" cried she, burying her face in her hands, "the sin! the sin! the fault that must not be forgiven,—the sin that will never leave us!"

He partially loosened his hold of her, and whilst one arm encircled her waist, and he sought with the other to draw her hands from her burning cheeks. "Vévette," he said, in a tone that was almost stern; "you are wanting in respect to yourself, wanting in respect to my wife, whom I have worshipped as a saint. What sin have you ever committed, Vévette? Your own scrupulousness is less pure than greater ignorance would be. I know where the fault lies;—in the teachings of your convent; in the gloomy, narrow, false, impious teachings of people who do not know that true love is bright, strong, and pure as steel or flame. Answer me, dear; is marriage an Institution, sanctified by the Church? Is the marriage vow blessed? Is marriage a sacrament?"

"Of course it is," murmured she, with downcast eyes.

"And you believe that when girls give themselves away in marriage to husbands who are at least totally indifferent to them, the bond is a holy one, and the wives are blessed among women! Do you ever ask yourself, Vévette, why some wives are faithless?"

"Because they are tempted by the Evil One," said Vévette, timidly.

"No, my sweet one," continued Raoul, looking tenderly at her and softly stroking her hair. "It is because they do not love their husbands, and that it is dangerous to ask from the weak creatures that we are more than is humanly possible."

"But, Raoul," hesitatingly whispered she, "it is wrong;—the Church forbids it."

"God does not forbid it," answered he, gravely. "His Word nowhere forbids it. Suppose, my own, we were married this very day, would it still be wrong that you should love me?"

Poor Vévette trembled, and blushed, and looked the very picture of distress and confusion, as she attempted to reply. "Yes, dear Raoul," stammered she, "it would always be wrong. It is a sin,—a dreadful sin,—and God will punish us. It is a dreadful sin for a woman to love her husband even, as—as—I—love you!" she faintly uttered at last.

Raoul folded her gently, almost paternally, to his breast. "Poor child!" he said in a very mournful tone; "and so, it is not the circumstances of the love, not its concealment, not the momentary untruth,—no! it is the love itself which is the sin! poor little one!" And he remained silent and thoughtful for some time, with Vévette's head lying upon his shoulder and his own head resting upon her brow.

More than an hour went by, and young Morville tried to make his future bride comprehend her duties to him and to herself, and he succeeded in so far as that she agreed to subordinate all other considerations to her passionate devotion for him; but that the devotion itself was sinful,—that being passionate it must be so,—that remained ineradicable from poor little Vévette's creed.

"And now, Raoul," pleaded the girl in her turn, as the moment for separation came, "what is the trouble that is hanging over you;—for there is one. You have some other care besides the mere grief, deep as it is, of leaving. May I not know it?" she added, looking up imploringly at him.

A cloud darkened Raoul's countenance, he pressed his lips together, and drew a long hard breath. "No!" was his rejoinder. "I cannot share that trouble with you, Vévette."

"Then you have a trouble?" she retorted, eagerly.

"Most men have; and there are many that must be borne in solitude and silence. Some burdens may be shared by those we love; but some there are that it is not good to halve, even with one's wife." The tone in which this was spoken left no room for further entreaty, and threw a deeper chill over the final parting of the lovers than either could have anticipated.

In the sense of utter loneliness which fell upon Vévette when Raoul was gone, there was something mixed which she could not define; a sort of shadow which prevented the absolute blank. "Had Raoul a secret? what was it?" that thought occupied her.

Scarcely had he left the room through the window opening on the terrace, when a knock came at the door. Vévette started, and bade the visitor enter, with a beating heart and quivering voice. It was Mère Jubine's Louison with a letter in her hand. She tendered it to Vévette with a curtsy, saying it was from Monsieur Richard Prévost. When opened it was found to contain another letter, addressed to Félicie, and a few lines by which the younger sister was humbly requested to deliver the enclosure to the elder. It concerned, observed the writer, "an act of charity!"

"Is Monsieur Richard ill?" asked Vévette. The girl said she did not know, but did not think he was particularly strong in this damp weather, but that she had promised to deliver the letter. And then she went away.

Vévette, in her natural simplicity and her present agitation of spirit, did perhaps think it rather odd that Monsieur Richard should send a letter to Félicie; but what failed to strike her as strange was, that Mère Jubine's Louison should be his messenger.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## A PRUDENT YOUNG LADY.

I HAVE not yet told you how very very pretty Mademoiselle Félicie was. She was not lovely;—her sister was that;—neither was she handsome, or beautiful. In each of these words there was something above or something beyond Mademoiselle Félicie. But she was that supremely *jolie femme* which a Frenchwoman alone ever is. Rather under than over the middle height, the first idea she gave you was that of perfect proportion. She had not the most beautiful throat, or the most beautiful arm, or hand, or shoulder, in the world; no one particular limb reminded you of a statue; but the whole went together marvellously well! Each part so fitted the other, the ensemble was so harmonious, so pleasant to the eye, that you were charmed without knowing why, and would have voted to be insupportable whoever should have attempted to persuade you that you ought not to be so. All the lines were soft and rounded in Félicie's face and figure. In her whole being there was not an angle, or anything abrupt. She was all grace, all charm. Her voice was insinuating, her movements undulating, her looks caressing. She was precisely that kind of Frenchwoman whom, if you have the most distant dream of remaining,—however little,—your own master, you had best never meet. She never alarms and never releases you.

Her grandmother, *la belle Madame de Vêrancour*, had, as old Martin Prévost had told his nephew, been Félicie's perfect prototype; and, Heaven knows, her domestic career had not been one to render the position of her husband an enviable one. As a young woman of sixteen, before the Revolution, she had been distinguished by one exploit only, but that one was enough. She was reputed to have beaten the famous Duc de Lauzun hollow, and to have considerably helped to ruin him, whilst absolutely vanquishing his inconstancy. She went by the name of "*La Provinciale qui a roué Lauzun*," and after the great catastrophe, she carried her devastations into her own department, and, till past fifty, levied contributions of all kinds upon the male population for many leagues round. Married or single, all paid tribute; and the evil-tongued declared that all classes were admitted alike to compete for her favour. Some went even further, and hinted that the present Vicomte was the son of a *Sous-Préfet* of the Empire, whom she certainly had managed to preserve from dismissal under the Restoration.

*La belle Madame de Vêrancour* was not of a religious turn of mind. She did not even grow devout with old age, but died, it was said, in an altogether unsatisfactory manner. Her portrait, painted by Madame Lebrun, in the full costume of her palmy days of Versailles, hung in



the drawing-room which the two sisters had arranged at the Château ; and when Félicie happened to be alone, she would sit intently gazing at the image, with a look that was not easily definable. Was it envy, or was it merely curiosity alone ?

Except for the powder which disguised the wavy chestnut hair—that thick, naturally curling, blond cendré hair, which Félicie dressed so exquisitely,—except for that, everything was alike in the too celebrated Lady of Vêrancour and her descendant ; the same calm, satin skin, with just enough of delicate colour to prevent its being pale ; the same small nose, with its transparent nostrils ; the same finely arched eyebrows, and strangely fascinating light hazel eyes ; the same—no ! not quite the same mouth. The epoch had set its stamp there, and Lauzun's mistress had the rich full-blossomed lips that perhaps excused something out of much that they explained ; whilst our Mademoiselle de Vêrancour possessed lips so thin that they were hardly more than the edges of the mouth ; bright red lines closing over twin rows of exquisitely pearl-like teeth,—with also the one little fault that they were rather pointed, rather sharp.

That was the impress of the age. Madame de Vêrancour, la belle, had been lavish in every possible sense. This is not the defect of modern France. One person in D—— had even been ungallant enough,—it was the Doctor, who disliked the people of the Château because they were all so healthy that they never “consulted !”—one person had replied to a remark about Félicie's attractions :—“Attractive, may be ; jolie comme un ange, may be ; but that girl's an attorney !”

Mademoiselle Félicie did certainly give those who had dealings with her a notion that she was practical ; but then irregularity, let alone prodigality, is accounted such a sin, and to be wanting in order brings down such reproof upon a woman in the France of our day !

Hitherto Félicie's field of action had been a limited one, and her adversaries had been mostly female ones. Of these she had not left one unconquered ; and at the convent at Poitiers she was the “pattern-girl,” the example held up by all the sisters,—excepting only the unfortunate Madame Marie Claire, who took refuge with Vêvette ;—and she had been pronounced dogmatically by Notre Mère to be certain to be an “honour to her sex,” to be eminently wise and prudent and circumspect ; strong against all sentimentality, and of an equally balanced mind. Monsieur de Vêrancour, whilst congratulating himself upon having such a daughter, was not altogether without a certain feeling of inferiority when in her presence, and it had been affirmed by Céleste, who came herself under Félicie's direct control, that he was afraid of her.

After Champmorin's withdrawal from the projected matrimonial engagement, the Vicomte certainly did feel slightly embarrassed, and had not yet made up his mind as to the precise terms in which he

should impart to his daughter that she was not likely to be married so soon as had been supposed.

She saved him all trouble on that point.

"Dear father," she said, one evening, in the sweetest of all possible tones, and preliminarily kissing him on the forehead, with the most touching grace—"Dear father; I know you have been annoyed,—pained,—about something that touches me and my establishment. I can guess what has happened; and though it is not customary for a young girl to mix herself up in such matters, still ours is an exceptional case, and I feel it incumbent upon me to share with you the burdens laid upon us by our position;—by the nobility of our name so sadly at war with the narrowness of our means."

"You always were an angel, *Félicie*," exclaimed her father; "but it is not fitting that——"

"I beg your pardon, father," interrupted she; "it is fitting that we should talk together over all this, for it is not fitting that our name should go a-begging. The daughters of illustrious houses are not constrained to the same little prudish practices as those of bourgeois origin, and where the honour of the race is at stake they must lay aside prejudice, and see what is best to be done, just as, in other ages, they would, in the absence of a garrison, have had to defend the château, arms in hand. I know poor *Monsieur de Champmorin* has been obliged to retire."

*Monsieur de Vêrancour* made a movement.

"He is not to be blamed, father," resumed *Félicie*; "he must not be blamed; we have nothing to reproach him with, and it would be unseemly and wrong in us to bear the slightest ill-will towards him."

"I bear him no ill-will whatever," muttered the *Vicomte*; "but those about him have talked, and will talk, and the position is a very awkward one."

"Yes, father dear, of course," rejoined *Félicie*, in her very blindest tones; "of course it is next to impossible to prevent people like notaries and all that class from discussing our affairs; they will talk of us; it is their chief pastime; and,—I don't deny it,—it falls naturally very heavy upon girls like us, to be made the theme of conversation of all the vulgar little bourgeois of such a miserable bit of a place as this; but that is the fault of provincial towns;—there is no other occupation save that of prying into your neighbours' concerns. If we were in Paris, instead of being in D——, we should escape all, or nearly all, the immediate effects of the disaster."

*Vévette* looked up from her tapestry with amazement.

"In Paris?" echoed the *Vicomte*. "Yes, probably so, everything passes unnoticed in Paris, as in all great centres; but what earthly chance would there ever be of our being able to get to Paris?"

There was a pause of a few seconds, and then *Félicie* resumed, in

a tone of discouragement, after musing for a few moments, "To be sure; it is that perpetual want of money!" and then there came another silence.

"Why is it," asked Vévette, timidly, "that so much more money seems required for two people to live upon when they marry than each would find more than sufficient if they remained single? A single man can live on very little, a single woman on less, yet, when it is a question of marrying, ten times their income appears not to be enough."

"Because, my poor child," rejoined Félicie, dogmatically, "well-born people do not marry to live, but to represent. We have to uphold our families and our names; and our duty is to take care that the children who succeed us are enabled to support their position in life with dignity. We have not yet, in spite of all Revolutions, come to such a state of things as is said to exist amongst the English, where, I believe, two individuals actually marry because they have taken some imaginary fancy for each other, and in their folly count for nothing the fortune and social standing of their children. No! we have not yet come to that."

Monsieur de Vêrancour gazed at his eldest daughter with admiration, while she propounded her theories of social economy. "All that you say is right and wise," observed he with a sigh, leaning his head upon his hand; "but unluckily it brings about one result—the levelling of everything before money. Without riches, what is to be done?"

"Yes, dear papa," answered Félicie, submissively; "you are right there, as you always are, and I can't help thinking it is wrong and unchristianlike in the persons of our caste to despise money as they do." Oh! Félicie, when do they so?—"to look down upon riches, when riches have so often been brought to our very feet by Providence, in order that by uniting with them we should elevate the rich to our own level, and teach them to be pious and right-thinking like us."

"Well, I can only say riches were never brought to my feet," remarked the Vicomte; "nor do I think that I can be accused of ever having scorned them."

"If I might venture, dearest father," suggested she, with her most caressing air, "though it is wandering far away from our subject, I would say that you were very hard, quite unmerciful, the other day, to poor Monsieur Richard." The Vicomte started, and, turning round, stared his daughter full in the face. "You quite abashed and hurt him when he was telling you of the great fortune he had inherited, and of what he means to make of Châteaubréville."

"No, I declare I did not," answered stoutly Monsieur de Vêrancour; "just the contrary; I told him that if he had a hundred thousand francs a year he might actually marry a lady."

"Yes," responded Félicie, with the sweetest of all feline glances and accents; "but you did not tell it him—kindly."

"Humph! as to that," grunted her father, "I don't know how I told it him. I suppose I told it him just as I would have told it any other man of his sort."

"Ah! but you see, father dear, we should be so careful of hurting the feelings of those beneath us. Men don't think of that. Women do. Poor Monsieur Richard, you see, is somewhere about the richest man in the department, besides being the most amiable and worthy young man in the world. So perfectly right-thinking. In a year's time he will be Monsieur de Châteaubréville, with a splendid country house, and an establishment in Paris, and if,—as you advised him to do,—he should marry a well-born woman, we shall all go and visit at Châteaubréville, and we should really treat him already as a friend."

"Well, so we do!" ejaculated the Vicomte; "don't I let him dine here with us? Treat him as a friend! Yes; but I should like to see you, who theorise so finely, treating him as an equal."

"We are taught that all men are equal," said sweetly Félicie.

"But nobody believes it," retorted the Vicomte. "Why, I should like to see the rebuff he would get from you, if he ventured to ask you to become his wife. Treat him as an equal indeed!"

"In the first place, papa," rejoined Félicie, gently, but with a shade more of firmness in her tone, "one does not make one's equal of a man merely by marrying him; when la grande Mademoiselle married Lauzun, it was out of her power to make him her equal."

"Maybe," interrupted Monsieur de Verancour; "but he made her pull off his boots all the same."

"That regards her confessor, and concerns her duties of obedience; but, I repeat it, marriage binds, but does not equalise: in the next place, I would not shrink from any sacrifice that should be needed for the good of our family,—of our house."

The Vicomte sprang to his feet, and clapping his two hands upon his breast, roared at her loudly, staring at her with all his might.

"You, Félicie, you! You would marry Monsieur Richard?"

"It is Monsieur Richard who would not marry me, papa," she replied with imperturbable calmness.

"You would consent to be Madame Prévost," continued her father, unheeding all interruptions.

"Never, papa," answered she, in a milder tone, and with even more calmness than before; "but I would consent to be Madame de Châteaubréville with a hundred thousand francs of income, and to live half the year in Paris, where the title of Count would be easy to obtain."

"A pretty thing, indeed, for us," sneered the Vicomte. "A title given by Monsieur Bonaparte! Why, you would be ashamed to wear it."

"No, indeed, papa, I should not. Authority is authority always; and there is our own cousin, the Marquis de Vouvray, who has let himself be made a Chamberlain,—the title means little enough for us,—but it means still the separation from those beneath, from the mass; that is the principal thing needed."

Monsieur de Vêrancour was silent for some moments, and rubbed his forehead anxiously. "Is it possible, Félicie," he asked at last, "that you can be serious? Is it possible you can mean that you would marry Monsieur Richard?"

"Father," she answered, steadily and slowly, "I tell you again there is no sacrifice I will not make to our position. I make it to you, I make it to Vêvette." The latter looked up suddenly with an air almost of terror. "It is my duty. We are not on earth to think of ourselves, but of others. One of my first duties is to think of Vêvette. Her turn must come in a year or two." Vêvette felt herself grow cold and shudder inwardly. "And how is she to be provided for?"

"You are, indeed, a perfect heroine," said the Vicomte, with conviction, and as though humbled at the superior virtue of his child.

"Luckily," resumed she, giving an upward glance of thanksgiving, "I have always had my duty held up before my eyes, and, after all, duty is a thing which a well-born woman does easily." Poor Vêvette felt more than ever what a wretched sinner she was. "The difficulty in all this," added Félicie, after a pause, "would be to bring poor Monsieur Richard to understand that he might ask for my hand." She watched her father with a very curious glance from under her eyelids whilst uttering these words. "It is a delicate and difficult negotiation. Perhaps the Abbé Leroy——"

Monsieur de Vêrancour waved his hand. "I think," interrupted he, "it would be quite possible to make Monsieur Richard understand; but, of course, I must reflect on all this. I must take time."

"Dear father!" exclaimed the girl, "of course you must do whatever you think fit. I shall always obey."

"Oh, Félicie!" cried Vêvette, throwing her arms round her sister's neck, when the Vicomte had retired for the night. "Can you? Can you?"

"A well-born woman can always do what is her duty, my dear Vêvette," answered Mademoiselle Félicie, indulging in just a very little self-gratulation.

## THE NEW MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN FAMILY.

---

ALL the antecedents of Italy, the varied character and peculiarities of the different races which constitute her people, and the special circumstances of the struggle in which she has been and is still engaged in the effort to become a nation, combine to render the spectacle of the birth-throes attending this struggle one of the most interesting that a statesman or social philosopher could be invited to witness. And pages full of interest and instruction for both those classes of students might be written on the different phases of her internal condition, as she wins her way painfully through the numberless difficulties and dangers which encompass her early years. But there is one difficulty in her path which so effectually and fatally stops the way, and renders all onward progress,—struggle as she may,—impossible, that this question alone exclusively occupies all minds and energies within the peninsula. And this same knot has the unfortunate privilege of connecting considerations, which should be left to the sole arbitrament of the young nation herself, with the interests and feelings of all the other members of the European family. So that the attention of the world beyond the Alps is also concentrated almost wholly on this one point.

Till the "Roman question" is settled, or is in a fair way of settlement, no Italian man,—governor or governed,—can successfully apply his mind or his energies to any other subject; nor can any transalpine spectator of the Italian drama interest himself in any less all-important point of the action.

The following few pages, therefore, will be devoted entirely to an attempt to state, somewhat more succinctly than has yet perhaps been done, the present position of that question, the events and circumstances which have brought it into that position, and the probable prospects of its solution, so far as the very cloud-enveloped character of the future towards which it is advancing may render possible.

We have said that the arrangement of the Roman difficulty should be left to the sole arbitrament of Italy. And there is a numerous and active section of the Italian people which holds that such an assertion, unmodified in any way, does but state the absolute and inalienable right of the nation. But unhappily, the writer,—who would look at matters as they really stand from no partisan point of view,—is constrained to add a rider to this proposition. He must say that the Roman question should be left to the sole arbitrament of

Italy, if that question had any analogy with aught else which international rules of conduct ordinarily govern. Most unfortunately it has no such analogy. And probably all Italians, save the extreme party which has been referred to, would admit that the disastrous peculiarities of the Roman difficulty do constitute a necessity for acting in regard to it in concert with the other nations, or, at least, with a due amount of regard to their feelings and prejudices on the subject. Indeed, the ready acceptance on the part of the Italian Government of the French Emperor's proposals for a conference of the European states, to be assembled for the definitive settlement of the questions in debate between Italy and the Pope, is of course a full admission of this. And it may be assumed, probably, that now, in the position in which the attempt and failure of Garibaldi have placed the nation, not even the "party of action," with the exception of that small portion of it which hopes to find in the Roman difficulty a lever for overturning the monarchy, have much objection to the assemblage of such a conference.

The position at the present moment is a purely expectant one; and the next point in the game, for which everybody is waiting, is to see whether a conference can be assembled or not. M. Forcade, by no means, as we all know, much disposed to see the policy of the Emperor in too favourable a light, seems to think, as appears from the "*Chronique de la Quinzaine*," in the "*Revue des Deux Mondes*" for the 15th of November, that the invitation to Europe will be favourably received. We, having the advantage of writing a few weeks later, are still in much doubt on the subject. At this moment in which we write, it still seems improbable that the Conference should be assembled, but even yet the question is in doubt. Should it, however, meet, what power will it have of solving the difficulty? Is there any likelihood that the Papal Court will consent to be bound by the decisions of any such areopagitic body, be they ever so unanimous? And if Europe, as represented by the members of such a conference, were to proceed to arrange a status for the Pope, irrespective of his own voice in the matter, with the intention of carrying their decision into effect by force,—is that what France means or wishes? Would France consent to this? M. Forcade, indeed, in the writing already referred to, evidently contemplates such an issue from the labours of the proposed conference. If, says he, it should be found impossible to establish the bases of an understanding between the Pope and the Italian Government, "the implied consequence of the failure of this vast diplomatic enterprise would be the disengagement of France from her responsibilities in the Roman question. France would cease to be the sole guarantee of the temporal power. She would no longer sustain alone a struggle against the nature of things." Such would doubtless be the view of the fitting policy of France held by the school of politicians to which

M. Forcade belongs. Such would be the view which probably most Englishmen would hold as the wisest, best, and most useful. But is that the view which the Imperial Government would be likely to hold? It may be feared not. What is it to be presumed that the Emperor wishes in this matter? He has always been an enigmatic man. The Sibylline unclearness and tortuousness of his utterances have done much to confirm the world in its opinion of the profundity of his sagacity. We shall hardly be likely to get much out of any attempt to discover that very important factor in our calculations,—what the Emperor really wants,—by any examination of his official talk. But it may perhaps be possible to attain no inconsiderable degree of assurance on this subject from a consideration of his past acts, and of what, on the universal principles of human wishes, he must be disposed to desire. This path of inquiry into the riddles set before us by our nineteenth-century sphinx has frequently been tried. But in this matter of the Emperor's probable intentions and line of conduct as to the Roman question a very fundamental error, as it seems to us, has been allowed to vitiate the calculation.

It has been repeatedly said, by very various classes of inquirers, that surely the Emperor will not so manage the Roman question as to allow it to become the means of undoing his own work in Italy. M. Forcade, in his last "*Chronique*," reiterates the same argument. The Emperor, it is urged, has done so much to accomplish the unification of Italy that it cannot be supposed that he will now permit the Roman question to lead to the undoing, or to imminent risk of the undoing, of that work.

Now it really is very important that the value of this inference should be examined by the light of a few indisputable facts in the imperial conduct, which would seem to have been absolutely forgotten by the world, so wholly are they ignored in the daily speculations which are rife on this subject. It is important that these facts should be borne in mind, not only for the purpose of forming a probable judgment as to the line of French policy with regard to the present phase of the Roman question, but for the sake also of the authenticity of the history of these troublous times of ours.

It is asserted, or assumed rather, that Napoleon III. has wittingly and intentionally used the power of France for the purpose of accomplishing Italian unification. Is this true?

It is true that the Emperor gave that assistance to Italy which alone, it may be fairly assumed, enabled her to throw off the Austrian yoke. He found Italy a congeries of small and very weak states, the rulers of which, all, save one, were under the immediate influence of Austria, and existed only by her patronage and protection. And Piedmont, which alone was not in this position, was in a condition of chronic hostility against Austria, with whose power the little sub-Alpine kingdom was wholly unable to cope. The Emperor found



this condition of things in Italy ; and he used the power of France to liberate Italy,—all but one corner,—from this influence, and this oppression. Much has been said about the gratitude due from Italy to France on this score. This is not the place to write the pages, which much need to be written, on the extensive subject of international gratitude. But it may be remarked, obiter, that if the Emperor Napoleon used the power and the treasure of France in effecting this object pour les beaux yeux de l'Italie, then the widows and orphans and tax-payers of France would have a terrible accusation to bring against him for misusing the power intrusted to him for the benefit of France. We do not think that such an accusation against the Emperor would be well grounded. We have no idea that he led the power of France against Austria in Italy for love of Italy. We believe that he had in view the legitimate object of benefiting France, and through France himself, as far as his lights enabled him to see the means of doing so. We believe that it was his recognised purpose to substitute French influence for Austrian in the peninsula ;—to have there a number of small states as before, but subjected to French instead of to Austrian authority. People repeat again and again the famous boasting promise that Italy should be free from the Alps to the Adriatic,—a sonorous phrase, just as meaningless as the word “ free ” is far from being a precise and intelligible definition of a scheme of social polity. But what it clearly could not mean is, that Italy should be one,—should form one nation, with one government, from the Alps to the Adriatic. Whatever the nature or amount of the “ freedom ” promised to her, there was no promise here of governmental unity. Was it to be expected that France or her ruler should wish to raise up a united nation of six-and-twenty millions on her frontier ? Was it in accordance with the well-known traditional policy of France ? Was it in accordance with the sentiments of France, as manifested on the more recent occasion of the formation of another large nation on another frontier ? So terrible did the formation of this Italian nation seem to the French mind, that as soon as it appeared probable that such would be the issue of the Emperor's action in the peninsula, bitter lamentations and violent attacks on his policy were heard in the French Senate, which was in those utterances the wholly faithful representative of the national heart. “ What ! ” it was said, “ raise up a nation of twenty-two,”—then twenty-two, while there was yet hope that Venice might be saved out of the consequences of the huge mistake,—“ raise up a nation of twenty-two millions at our doors ! What ! create in pure wantonness a rival in the hegemony of the races of Latin stock, who may well one day become a most formidable one ! What ! abandon for ever the long-cherished hope and phrase that the Mediterranean was, or should be, a French lake ! Could any French ruler in his senses inaugurate a policy big with such disastrous results ? ” The accusations of the French senators against their

Emperor's prudence and foresight may have been just. They were unjust when directed against his intentions and purposes. And the mouthpiece who spoke for the Emperor to the nation was accordingly directed to assure the Senate that this unification of Italy had formed no part of the imperial policy; that, in fact, the Emperor had left no stone unturned to prevent it from accomplishing itself. Was that exculpatory assertion true? None but those who, from want of discrimination, are convinced that every statement made by Napoleon III. must needs be false, can doubt the exact truth of it. If Villafranca is forgotten or explained away, has Gaeta no memories? If the histories connected with those names do not speak with sufficient clearness, is not the record of Florence unmistakable and explicit enough? When Ricasoli was at the head of the Provisional Government of Tuscany, when the union of that province with Piedmont and with the rest of Italy had not yet been decided on by the inhabitants, the Emperor despatched envoy after envoy,—M. Reiset, Prince Joseph Poniatowski, and lastly, his cousin the Prince Napoleon,—charged to use their utmost endeavours to induce Tuscany to vote for its own autonomy under a ruler of its own, instead of aggregating itself to the rest of Italy. Had Florence then listened to the voice of the charmer, there would have been an end to the hopes and the fears which waited on the formation of the new kingdom. And the temptation so to listen was at that time great at Florence. For it may be most truly asserted that there was hardly a Florentine, from the prince in his ancestral palazzo to the crossing-sweeper in the street, who did not then feel persuaded that the conversion of Tuscany into a province, and of Florence into a provincial town, would greatly injure his own individual interests. But Ricasoli was immovably firm, and the Tuscan people were patriotic; for the all but unanimous vote for the aggregation of Tuscany to the rest of Italy was the true and genuine expression of real unselfish patriotism. Had that patriotism not existed, the formation of a great Italian nation would have remained a dream, the fears of the French senators would have been appeased, and the policy of the Emperor would have been justified.

Surely, then, in the face of all these facts, nothing can be a greater mistake than to talk of the unification of Italy as a work which the Emperor accomplished, and which, therefore, it may be assumed that he would not willingly destroy. The unification of Italy was effected in despite of the Emperor Napoleon's wishes and efforts. And it is perfectly reasonable to suppose that the undoing of what was so effected would be exactly what he would wish.

But has his past conduct with regard to this Roman question been such as would seem to be in accordance with the existence of such a wish? Those who have taken note of the unceasing difficulties with which the successive Italian governments have had to struggle, best

know how admirably well calculated is the maintenance of the temporal power to effect the object of pulling down the Italian throne and breaking up the nation once again into the fragments out of which it was constituted. No government can be otherwise than weak as long as that exhausting sore remains open. The country is rendered ungovernable, restless, incapable of giving its energies to those reforms and improvements which are so urgently needed. The small but unceasingly active republican party is kept alive; their hands are strengthened, and their game is played by the continuance of a condition of things which gives ample scope for appeal to all revolutionary passions. But if the maintenance of the temporal power of the Papacy was thus powerfully tending to preserve a state of things which gave promise of bringing about, sooner or later, that disruption of Italy which we are assuming the French Emperor to desire, why did he at last consent to withdraw his troops from Rome? Because by so doing he made a yet worse and more dangerous position for the Italian Government, while gaining a certain amount of very much needed political capital for himself. In fact, the position made by the Convention of the 15th September for the Italian Government was so utterly false and mischievous a one that it was foreseen from the first that it would be absolutely untenable. The Italian ministry of that day would probably have done better had they refused to accept the Grecian gift proffered to them. But the temptation of getting rid of the presence of French soldiers at Rome at any price was too great to be resisted. How little has been gained to Italy from the concession obtained at so great a cost the recent events have shown. But the sagacity of the Emperor,—always on the theory which we are supporting, that what he mainly wishes with regard to Italy is, that it should be split up again into fragments,—has been in this matter at least justified. The last fruits of the September Convention have gone nearer towards very seriously risking such a catastrophe than is perhaps generally known.

It is very generally believed in Italy by the adversaries of the party of action,—the moderates, and government men of different shades,—that had Garibaldi succeeded in seizing Rome, he would not have done so for the profit of the present Italian Government and the present Italian monarch;—that he would not have repeated on this occasion the self-sacrificing, or in any case the loyal rôle which he performed at Naples; but would have made his success a stepping-stone to the raising of the republican flag in the south. And it may perhaps be assumed that Garibaldi does not feel now towards the monarchy of the House of Savoy quite as he did at the time of his former exploit. Nevertheless, we are not disposed to believe that Garibaldi would have acted otherwise than as a loyal son of Italy as she is at present constituted. But we do believe that very serious danger would have existed, and that such a turn as has been indicated might have been

given to any revolutionary success. This, it is true, would not have been exactly what it can be supposed that the Emperor would have wished. A revolutionary movement in Italy on a scale of any importance would, it can hardly be doubted, involve very serious danger to the Imperial Government in France. And it is a danger to which the Emperor has ever shown himself peculiarly sensitive. The "*proximus ardet Ucalegon*" is a cry to which Caesarism is rarely indifferent. The Emperor, therefore, did not wish or intend that Garibaldi should be allowed to achieve any success. But the necessity, in which his attempt would place the Italian Government, either to repress the movement by force of arms, or to look on while it was put down by French arms,—a dilemma of which either horn was about equally dangerous to the authority of the King's Government,—very satisfactorily played his game for him. And the final result of the September Convention is that the French troops are once again on Italian soil, while the King himself, and any possible government which it is open to the King to form, are in a very much worse position before the nation than they were before the Convention was signed.

So thoroughly and perfectly has this been felt to be the case, that the movement of the volunteers against Rome was very largely promoted and aided by the friends of the temporal power in Italy. Of course all such aid and complicity have been carefully concealed and loudly denied. But we have reason to feel very great confidence in the information we have received that such was the case to a very large extent. The "*papalini*," or Pope's friends, who are friends also, of course, to the other fallen dynasties of the peninsula, are in fact the only party in Italy who desire that the work which has made Italy a nation should be undone. The republicans, with the exception of a very small number of men,—quiet philosophers for the most part, who dream of a federation of republics after the fashion of Switzerland,—the republicans, though anxious to overthrow the throne, yet wish to maintain the unity of Italy. The union, therefore, of the "*red*" and "*black*" forces on this occasion has been a remarkable instance of the way in which men who differ *toto cœlo* as to their ultimate designs, will yet suffer a common hatred to group them together under the same banner for a design not the ultimate one.

It is extremely probable that Garibaldi, if asked the question, would emphatically deny that he or his had received any aid or support from the "*black*" party in the peninsula. And if he were to make such denial, we for our parts should place the most implicit trust in the good faith of his assertion. But those who know Italy, and the way in which such matters are managed there,—and specially those who add to this knowledge a knowledge of the man Garibaldi,—would not be one whit the less disposed to believe that the fact has been as above stated. And it is the fact, as the Italian Government well know, that these underhand machinations of the "*black party*,"—priest party, or retro-

grade party, by whatever name it may be called,—throughout Italy, as well as in Rome and in France, gave to the recent Garibaldian movement its most dangerous aspect, and still constitutes the gravest peril which Italy has to fear. For these men do unquestionably aim at the overthrow of the monarchy and the restoration of the old state of things in Italy. The republicans, or at all events the far greater number of them, including, as we firmly believe, Garibaldi himself, are in a great measure held in check by the fear that the fall of the monarchy might lead to the dismemberment of Italy. They would fain substitute a republic for the monarchy; but they would preserve, at all events, the unity of Italy. Their recent allies, “the blacks,” are restrained by no such considerations.

But then, it may be asked, why should not the Emperor, if he also wishes the dismemberment of Italy, have permitted the work of Garibaldi and the black party to have gone on unmolested by him? Because he knows full well that, whatever assistance the retrogrades may have given to the movement party for their own ends, success, if it had been attained, would have been wholly to the profit of the “reds.” The dismemberment, which he would fain see, could be reached not only through revolution, but by the prevalence of purely revolutionary ideas and principles. And this would of course by no means suit the imperial views. There is no chance of a dismemberment of Italy on “black” principles. The retrogrades in Italy are dangerous as a disturbing element; dangerous as assisting to bring about a condition of things which may form the pretext for French intervention; and most dangerous of all when they ally themselves with other disturbing forces tending to wholly different issues. But it may be assumed, we think, as certain that they will never succeed in re-establishing their Pope-king in the provinces which he has already lost.

But they are fanatics; and there is nothing surprising, therefore, in their entertaining any amount of delusive hope and expectation. But is the Emperor a fanatic? Whatever else he may be imagined to be by the different theorists as to his character and conduct, it will hardly be supposed that Napoleon III. is a religious fanatic. It is true that the Italians, in speculating on the line of conduct which he has held, and may be expected to hold, never forget, as an element in their calculations, that he has a wife who is supposed to be a fanatic. But whether or no the necessity for pleasing her may enter into the motives of his conduct as regards the Roman question, it is certain that the necessity of pleasing, or at least of not outraging, the convictions and prejudices of a large and extremely powerful section of his subjects, has a foremost place among the considerations by which his policy must be supposed to be guided. For the “black” party,—the priest, conservative, ultramontane, anti-1792 party,—is very much stronger in France than in Italy. And as regards Italian affairs, its

sentiments and opinions are animated not only by all those considerations in which the retrogrades in Italy would perfectly sympathise, but also by the bitter jealousy and hostility against Italian nationality on the grounds which have been pointed out above. Even if it should be clear to the Emperor that there is now no longer any hope of dismembering Italy into a number of small states in each of which French influence should be supreme, it is still absolutely necessary for the Emperor to avoid altogether alienating this section of his people,—necessary more than ever at a moment when he has succeeded in alienating so many other classes of his subjects. On the other hand, he has insured the bitter and abiding hatred of the Italian people, and he has run a risk of lighting up the flames of revolution in Italy. The latter danger has, perhaps, seemed to him to be balanced by the advantage it would offer him in affording an opportunity for interfering to extinguish them.

But there was quite enough in the situation to make it probable,—as is believed in Italy, and as the Emperor's more than ever darkly oracular sayings to Signor Nigra would seem to indicate,—that Napoleon hesitated as to the course he should pursue in the face of Garibaldi's raid into the Pontifical territory. And in estimating the conduct of Ratazzi, attacked as it has been with all that acrimony and violence which unhappily characterise Italian political differences, it should be remembered that such hesitation on the part of the Emperor would be a very strong reason, if not altogether a justification, for hesitation on the part of the Italian Government. There seems to be no doubt that all parties in Italy, the King, Signor Ratazzi, and the other ministers, the people and the Garibaldians, all had been led into the notion that they would be permitted to play the same game over again which they were allowed to play when Italy succeeded in getting possession of Emilia, the march of Ancona and Umbria; that when the deed was done,—when the Pope should have been dethroned, and Rome with its territory in the possession of Italian troops,—the Emperor would have said, "God bless me! who would have thought it? Well, now it is a '*fait accompli*,' and cannot be helped!" But very suddenly the conviction was brought home to the Italian King and his ministers, that no such game was to be permitted,—that the Emperor was in right earnest determined to put down the attempt of Garibaldi by armed force,—and that unless they,—the King and the Government,—very quickly and decidedly made it manifest to all men that they had neither act nor part in the Garibaldian enterprise, but were, on the contrary, thoroughly minded to control and suppress it, they,—the Italian King and Government,—would be treated in the manner in which it had become necessary to treat Garibaldi. Thereupon it behoved them, the King and the Government, to turn about with the most painful and humiliating suddenness. Signor Ratazzi went out of office,—a

happy resource in trouble which is denied to captains of sinking ships, and to kings. The King had to remain and bear the brunt of all the obloquy to which the circumstances so unavoidably exposed him. Every shadow of the popularity which once encircled him has departed from him. It would be difficult to find in history a more vilipended monarch than the once adored *re galantuomo*! There is no sort of vile treachery of which he is not accused. If it were of any use, or indeed in any way fitting, to fill pages with the most detailed and positive accounts of the King's treason to the national cause, but which nevertheless rest only on the unproved assertions of persons more or less worthy of credit, it would be easy to do so. But the accusations which are brought against the King for the conduct which he certainly did pursue limit themselves to this,—that he suddenly changed his course, that he executed a volte face at the imperious bidding of the Emperor. What else could he do? Fight France, and die in leading a charge against the French bayonets, say the red party, and many others, who have never belonged to that party. Yes! That is not so very difficult a thing to do, not so difficult perhaps as to occupy the position, with all its accompaniments, which Victor Emmanuel is now occupying! Garibaldi was abundantly ready to fight France, and to die leading his men up to the French Chassepots. But even Garibaldi had to take some account of the lives which would have been sacrificed with his own, when it became clear even to him that the sacrifice would be of no avail. And Garibaldi has for his reward the reproach of "mar-plot" thrown in his teeth by nearly all Europe. And a king has other considerations to think of besides those of which even a guerilla chief has to take count.

Seriously, was it the duty of the King to rush into a war with France, rather than submit to occupy the hideously painful position which circumstances and the French Emperor have made for him? We cannot think that any of those who have ever taken a share in the bearing of the responsibilities of directing the course and conduct of a nation will answer in the affirmative.

One thing, however, seems at least to be clear. If King Victor Emmanuel have any of the ordinary feelings of an honourable man,—if he be not utterly lost to every sentiment of the kind which makes an honoured name dear to a man, and the reverse intolerable, he must hate the Emperor of the French with a bitterness that only can be felt against the man who has robbed one of all that is dearest and best in life.

There is one portion of the King's conduct of which it is desirable to say a word before quitting this part of the subject,—a portion of his conduct which, according to our insular notions, would simply deserve the loss of his head; but for which, even in the midst of the storm of abuse which has been directed against him, nobody in Italy thinks of



blaming him. He carried on negotiations with the Emperor "out of his own head," as the schoolboy says, without the intervention or co-operation of any minister. One would imagine that the result of his operations in this line must have convinced him by this time of the superior advantages of the constitutional method, if kings were capable of conversion or conviction upon that point. But it is at all events a very discouraging symptom of the constitutional capabilities of the Italians, that these considerations should suggest themselves to no Italian.

As for Ratazzi, he was most unquestionably guilty of the vacillation of which his countrymen so loudly accuse him. He arrested and imprisoned Garibaldi,—in the prison of his own island home;—and he let him escape, a first and second time; he allowed him to come to Florence, and address the people publicly in a conspicuous locality of the city; and he allowed him to depart on his way to lead the volunteers against Rome by a special train, openly commanded for his service. There is reason, too, to believe that he also secretly assisted him with public money;—playing over again the game he had seen so successfully played by the master hand of Cavour. But the game was played. And all went wrong. The vacillations of the Emperor, if it is true, as seems probable, that he did vacillate, do certainly go far to excuse those of the Italian minister, who had to play his game in subordination to the momentarily shifting expressions of the imperial countenance. But there does seem some reason to think that a larger infusion of audacity into the Italian minister's play might have won the game. Had Garibaldi been counselled, on getting away from Caprera, to make straight for Rome, instead of perpetrating the useless and compromising folly of coming to make speeches at Florence; and had Ratazzi, taking advantage of the excuse afforded him by Garibaldi's evasion, instantly proceeded to occupy Civita Vecchia with a strong force before the French transports had left Hyères, would the Emperor then have risked a collision between the Italian troops and his own? Would he have sent his transport ships to Civita Vecchia at all? Many of those best qualified to form an opinion in Italy think that he would not have ventured to do so. And we are disposed to agree with them in their mode of thinking. It must not be forgotten, however, that it has been very loudly asserted, and is believed by many people in Italy, that the merit or demerit of having declined to commit Italy to a struggle with France, when it became certain that only by engaging in such a struggle, and coming out from it successfully, could the national aspirations for the possession of Rome be gratified, is due to the King. It is needless to say that those who maintain that this was the case do not deem it other than a crushing and indelible disgrace that the King should have so acted. It is asserted that Ratazzi would have embarked in such a struggle, and was prevented from doing so only by the refusal of the



King. It will probably be known with some degree of certainty, ere long, whether this was the case or not. If it be true that the minister went out upon this issue, it is still open to the King to say, "The minister who accepted the responsibility of carrying on the government in accordance with my view of the necessities of the case was a soldier, and one of experience and high reputation. The minister who differed from me, and who would have committed the nation to a war, was a civilian wholly incompetent to estimate the probabilities of the issue of the course he recommended." And though the aristocratic and anti-progressive characteristics of General Menabrea's antecedents, and his consequent unpopularity, will avail to prevent any such argument from sufficing to diminish the load of odium which now rests on Victor Emmanuel, it may be addressed, perhaps, to the tribunal of European public opinion with better effect. For General Menabrea is not only notoriously a soldier well skilled in the art he professes, but also an upright and honourable man.

But the game has been played and lost! There is but little comfort in talking of what might have been done. What was performed was a wretched farce, with a finale of very sad tragedy. But it is at least something to know that those poor Garibaldian boys, hungry, ill clothed, and worse armed, did fight well and bravely for the cause they went from their homes to support, being induced thereto really and solely by their love for their country and great desire to obtain what they deemed to be necessary to its welfare. Let what will be said to the contrary, our readers may be assured that this is true. Garibaldi's volunteers fought with desperate bravery against disadvantages which more practised soldiers would have known must render all fighting hopeless. Does not the bag which General de Failly was able to make by the aid of the Chassepot rifle show as much? Six hundred Garibaldians slain, with wounded in proportion! Really a most gratifying report. And with the loss of ONLY two of our own men! Well may the successful general say, in the honest exultation of his heart in the hour of victory, "Our Chassepot rifles have done wonders!" Wonders indeed! But General de Failly has in his own person performed a wonder greater still, which he is, it may well be believed, the first who has ever achieved. He has sent home to France a report of the success of French arms of which Frenchmen are ashamed. Well may M. Forcade say, with reference to the publication of this report, so glorious for the French arms, that "the editing of the '*Moniteur*' is conducted either with little good taste or with great negligence."

But this episode of the Roman question is now over. It will not be soon forgotten. But it is over. Garibaldi is at Varignano, "very silent and sad;" and Florentine sympathisers are striving to provide, no longer powder and rifles, but lint, splints, and plasters. The curtain may be considered to have definitely dropped on that act of

the drama; and a new and different set of actors are to appear on the scene. We have already stated our opinion, in contradiction to so valuable a one as that of M. Forcade, that these actors will be few. And every day that passes seems to render it more improbable that the statesmen of Europe will assemble at the invitation of the Emperor. The official prints in France, making the best of a sufficiently bad matter, proclaim exultingly that as yet there have been no refusals. But there seems reason to doubt whether even this is strictly true. And it does not appear, from the reply of Count Bismarck, that Prussia,—perhaps, under the circumstances, the most important member of the proposed conference,—is at all more well-disposed than might have been expected to lend a gratuitous hand to help the French Emperor out of his trouble.

What is the prospect, then, before us? The probability is, that France and Italy,—that is, the constituted governments of those two nations,—will be left to find the “solution” of the question between them. It is the business of diplomatists to find “solutions.” And they are supposed to be constantly doing it. But it is curious to consider how very rarely diplomatic labours have been able to “solve” any great question affecting the march of the world;—how very rarely any such question has been capable of solution by such means. Questions of this nature have to be left to be solved by other less immediate and less apparent forces. And we may be allowed, perhaps, to draw whatever of consolation the disastrous nature of the present circumstances is capable of affording from the consideration that in this respect this miserable Roman question much resembles the other questions which have vexed humanity in its march onwards. The Roman question will be effectually solved by the irresistible force of time and the onward rolling of human affairs. *Solvitur ambulando* may in this matter also be confidently answered to all curious inquirers into the future. The end of the Pope's course will be reached, and that at no very distant day, simply by allowing him to proceed on it. But, in the meantime, it is necessary that diplomacy should do its work, and at least attempt to apply to the course of events whatever of controlling direction it may be in its power to contribute. Of what nature are their efforts in this sort likely to be? It is rumoured, indeed, that notwithstanding the talk about a conference, the Italian and French Governments have already come to some degree of understanding as to the course they mean to pursue in this matter. And one patent fact has already emerged out of the ocean of rumours, suppositions, and speculations which would seem to have a bearing on the nature of the “solution” which these governments are said to be preparing for us.

The Italian Government is rapidly calling out soldiery.

In the face of financial embarrassments of the gravest and most urgent character, the new ministers of Victor Emmanuel are largely

increasing the active force of the Italian army. Is this alarmingly ominous phenomenon really symptomatic of the nature of the arrangement to be proposed to Italy to be made between her and the Pope? But what else can be supposed? For what purpose can it be necessary thus to plunge Italy yet deeper in the slough of debt and ruin, if it be not to strengthen the hands of the Government against its own people? With what other foe does Italy propose to go to war? To what purpose are these troops destined? For what other imaginable object can this be done than that of quelling all possible resistance on the part of the nation when the terms on which it is proposed to settle the relations of Italy and the Pope shall be made known, and shall be found to be such as will be intolerable to the Italian people?

There are still worse rumours in the air,—mere whispers as yet; but they are whispered by those whose whisperings best deserve to be listened to. We all remember the much talk of a secret article appended to the Convention of the 15th of September. It is said that this article has a real existence, and has reference to a further cession of territory by Italy to France. It is said that the time has now come when the agreement embodied in this article is to be openly declared and acted upon. It is said that the contemplated cession would give to France a very large slice of the ancient kingdom of Piedmont, together with several of the most important, and, in a military point of view, invaluable passes of the Alps.

If in reality there exist any intention of acting upon the provisions of any such article or agreement, then assuredly General Menabrea is acting prudently in providing himself beforehand with an amount of brute force sufficient to crush the nation he has been called to rule. But despite the difficulty of supposing such persons as are convinced of the truth of these intentions to be in error, we do not believe that King Victor Emmanuel and his ministers contemplate any measure of the kind. We find it difficult to believe that the Emperor Napoleon would, at the present juncture, venture on so flagitious an act of high-handed, lawless wrong-doing. We are well aware of the infinite importance to him of finding some sop or other to soothe the discontent and wounded vanity of his subjects. We know how vitally essential to his own position and safety it is that some such offering should be provided. We are perfectly well aware that nothing could be more grateful to the French nation in general, and especially to those classes of it which it is most important to him to conciliate, than such a spoliation of the kingdom of Italy, and such an acquisition by that of France. But, for all that, we do not think that the Emperor would venture on running the risk,—the twofold risk,—of throwing Italy into the arms of Prussia on the one hand, or of lighting up a flame of revolution and anarchic violence from the foot of the Alps to the Sicilian Sea on the other. It seems to us impossible that the consequences of such an attempt should be other than

these; and equally impossible that the Emperor should not know as much perfectly well. As to the Italian parties to such a scheme, surely no depth of dishonour and infamy would be deep enough for such treason and pusillanimity combined. As for King Victor Emmanuel, we have said that, whatever his faults may be, we do not hold it to have been proved that he has ever forfeited the character of a sovereign loyal to his country. Of General Menabrea we have said that he has always borne the character of an upright, honourable man. How can we conceive it possible that either of these men would lend themselves to the perpetration of a deed which would cover their names with such a storm of odium, obloquy, and infamy as has rarely overwhelmed either king or minister? Of course it is not in the legal power of any king or any ministers to bargain away a portion of the kingdom they are called to govern by a secret article in such hugger-mugger fashion. Of course all that the government of the King could undertake, by any such treaty or article, to do, would be to submit the propositions to the consideration of parliament. And of course there would not be the remotest chance of causing any such measure to pass any conceivable Italian Chamber of Deputies. But if it had been determined to commit the crime in question, recourse would necessarily be had to a suspension of parliamentary action, after the Chambers had been cajoled, as before has been done, into the suicidal granting of "full powers" to the ministry of the day. But the game would be too dangerous a one; and we repeat that, in a word, this suspicion seems to us incredible.

But the remaining hypothesis that the Italian Government is providing itself with troops for the coercion of the nation, because it is conscious that the terms to be announced as constituting the basis on which the Italian nation and the Pope are to stand towards each other for the future will be extremely unwelcome to the people,—this hypothesis does not unhappily seem to us to be so improbable. In fact, no conceivable terms to which there would be the remotest chance of inducing the Papal Court, or even the French Emperor, to accede, would be otherwise than grievously unpalatable to Italy. And though it is exceedingly lamentable that a nation which has aspired to the high dignity and advantage of self-government should be placed by the violence of its popular prejudices and passions under the necessity of submitting to the restraint of force, instead of to that of reason, it must be admitted that the Italians are somewhat less than reasonable in the demands they make on their Government with reference to the Papacy. The only "arrangement" which it would be agreeable to Italy to make with the Pontiff would be that he should arrange to make away with himself. They desire the abolition of the Papacy on many grounds, which are in the highest degree rational, and in which all those well-wishers to humanity, who best know what the Papacy is, especially in its own home, would and do

cordially agree with them. But they also desire it on other grounds which are not reasonable. And it cannot be denied that the latter are the class of motives which most potently excite the national mind, which have conducted the volunteers to Rome, and which make Italy all but ungovernable as long as the popular excitement upon the subject shall last.

They are most impatiently desirous that the Pope should be pulled down from his place, because they want to get into it. It may be confidently asserted, we are afraid, that the strongest and most active motive which is urging the Italians towards Rome is not the conviction that the Papal Court is an engine of horrible oppression to its own subjects, and a very mischievously bad neighbour to their own civil administration, nor merely the wish to complete the national unity by abolishing the distinctions which separate the bit of ground under priestly rule from the surrounding provinces, but the longing desire to make Rome the capital of Italy. It is not quite easy to make those who have not an intimate acquaintance with Italian people and with Italian history understand the violence, the nature, and the meaning of this strong desire. We all feel the poetry and the magic of the *magni nominis umbra*,—Eternal Rome. We can appreciate and sympathise with the feelings called into play by the mighty associations and memories which that name evokes. We can understand the poetical side of the question, and the notion engendered by it in the hearts of an emotional and unpractical people, that to make Italy again occupy the place she once held among the nations, it needs but that she should once again have her national existence in the spot whence decrees have been for so many centuries issued *orbi et urbi*. But this is only one, and that the least prominent and powerful, of the feelings that make the Italians intensely anxious to have Rome for their capital. It is unhappily the recrudescence and outcropping of the old internecine mediæval jealousies between one municipality and its neighbours and rivals. Turin cannot endure that Florence should be promoted to the high rank of capital, while itself is reduced to the position of a provincial city. Naples will not tolerate the superiority of any community of which it has always not unreasonably considered itself at least the equal. The "I am as good as you" feeling is equally strong in many another fair and once sovereign city. Even the scores of municipalities of the second class will not willingly see Florence, formerly their rival,—and in the case of many of them an upstart rival, once looked down on by them from the height of their own earlier secured power,—thus promoted over their heads. And this is in reality the sentiment which gives its chief intensity to the cry of "Rome for the capital of Italy!" All these ancient rivals and enemies would bow to the majesty of that name, —all the more readily that it is but a name.

That the magic abiding in that mighty name is in truth the only

title which Rome will have to become the capital of Italy,—that very many practical considerations of the gravest nature go to show that it is specially ill adapted for any such destiny,—that Florence, on the other hand, is pointed out by every practical consideration of position, whether regarded from an administrative or strategical point of view, of satisfactory sanitary conditions, of intellectual culture, of traditional character, and of special local conveniency, as the most eminently fitted to be the definitive capital of Italy, cannot now be insisted on at length, for the space at our command has been already exhausted, and the argument is a long one. We will abstain, therefore, from touching it any further than to mention the very pregnant fact that it is within our knowledge that it was the opinion of Cavour that Florence ought eventually to become the Italian capital.

But from the reasons which have been thus briefly referred to, this question of the capital has the effect of exasperating and exacerbating Italian minds on the subject of the arrangement to be made with Rome, to a degree which may furnish quite a sufficient explanation of the necessity felt by the present ministry for providing an adequate amount of force to put down any overt resistance to intentions, in respect to the Papal question, which they may be conscious will be likely to excite popular discontent. If these intentions, be they what they may, are to be, as we must hope and suppose, duly ratified by parliament, it is not otherwise than right that sufficient force should be at hand to support the law. Let us hope,—as we do for our own parts fully hope and believe,—that the present armament, most deplorable as it is in any case in a financial point of view, may have no other object. We hold it to be a chimerical hope that the Papacy can be altogether overthrown just yet. The human race must wait for this, one of its best hopes, yet a little longer. The time will come. It is admitted on all hands that Rome cannot become Victor Emmanuel's capital while the Pope, even though he were shorn of his temporal power, makes that city the spiritual capital of the Catholic world. And if the arrangement now to be made with the Papal Court be, as it can hardly be doubted that it will and must be, of a kind to preserve such an amount of dignity, and at least of sovereign seeming, to the Pontiff as will render it impossible for Rome to be made the civil capital of Italy, some consolation may be found, if not for Italy herself in the first moments of her disappointment, at least for the more coolly-judging well-wishers to Italy, in the resulting fact that she will thus be forced into maintaining a far more desirable capital.

## THE UNCONTROLLED RUFFIANISM OF LONDON, AS MEASURED BY THE RULE OF THUMB.

---

OUR attention has been specially called to the subject above named by the fact that, after a somewhat prolonged and minute inquiry, we have been unable to meet with any one who has been garrotted ; and that subsequently, finding ourselves unable to approach the subject in the first degree, we have not even succeeded in coming upon any man, woman, or child who has known any one that has been so maltreated. Then, having failed in this, which we may perhaps call a matter of magnitude, our attention has fixed itself upon a much smaller thing, and we have examined our own experience as to—pickpocketing. We ourselves have never had our pockets picked ! The classical and observant reader will, no doubt, quote against us that well-worked Latin line,—“ *Cantabit vacuus,*” &c. But we do carry a watch, plainly indicated by the dangling of a chain ; and never yet has sacrilegious hand been laid on that trinket in any of our not unfrequent wanderings through the streets, either by day or night. And following up our inquiries still further, we have found but few sufferers from this certainly not uncommon vice, who are personally known to us. Our maiden aunt lost her silver snuff-box in an omnibus, and the wife of our bosom opines that her handkerchief was once taken from her as she was extricating herself from the thralldom of a cab. To us, who know the habits of the latter lady, it seems unjust that this case should be allowed to swell the list of crimes which are recorded against the population of our metropolis. We always thought that that handkerchief had been left upon the cab-seat. Among our male acquaintance we can find hardly one who will acknowledge that within the last five years he has become a victim to the skill supposed to have been so widely taught in Professor Fagin’s establishment. We own at once that we began this inquiry in a spirit differing greatly from that which now animates us. Having heard and read much of the predatory habits of our immediate neighbours, and of the rowdyism, barbarity, and what we have ventured to call the uncontrolled ruffianism, of those among whom we live,—and who is there that does not hear and read so much on the subject as to make the hair of the head stand on end from time to time ?—we went somewhat deeply into the statistics of the metropolitan criminal population, intending to harrow up the very souls of our readers by such a de-



scription of the dangers to which they were daily subjected as would, at any rate, have entitled us to the merit of having produced a first-rate sensational article. But when we came to the digestion of these statistics,—for which process we acknowledge that the digesting materials bestowed upon us are hardly sufficiently strong and trustworthy,—we found ourselves wandering in a wilderness of facts which required a great many more facts to make themselves in the least useful. What did 4,738 pocket-handkerchiefs a year mean? Our imagination tells us at once that such a mass of silk and cambric brought to the repository of Professor Fagin must, to him and his, have been sufficient proof of a very lively trade;—that there was enough here, joined with the 598 watches and other articles enumerated, to fill the repositories of many other professors. But then came the question of population and the work of comparison. Those who had talked so much and had written so much of uncontrolled ruffianism, had intended to signify to us that ruffianism among us is more uncontrolled now than formerly,—is more uncontrolled among us than among others,—French shall we say, and Americans,—whom we regard as walking along with us, *pari passu*, on the road towards perfected civilisation, but whom we should most unwillingly acknowledge to be in advance of us. We found ourselves, as we say, in a wilderness, when we came to sift the matter after this fashion, and to digest the statistics with which we had surrounded ourselves. A certain number of persons had been garrotted annually in London during the past eight years. We decline to state the number on which we alighted. Not intending, in this essay, to work on statistical principles, we will not subject ourselves to the annoyance of having our statistics questioned. But the percentage on the population of London was very small indeed,—so small that when we came to add garrotting to the other crimes of the citizens, it showed a result hardly to be appreciated. Surely it could not be necessary for everybody to stay at home o' nights, or to walk always in the middle of the streets, to avoid a danger that was so minutely infinitesimal! And on comparing our present selves with our past selves, it seemed to us that garrotting had come up in place of other offences of violence,—indicating, by its nature, fear of the police, and therefore an efficient police, rather than an increase of uncontrolled villany. That there should be villany among three millions of people herded together, we take to be a matter of course. Whether there was an increased percentage of villany, and an increased percentage of the want of control;—that was the question; and finding our digestive organs weak for the manipulation of pure statistics, which require a good deal of chucking backwards and forwards, we acknowledge that we gave up the idea of exhaustive instruction to the public in that form.

As to the comparison between ourselves and our neighbours in the matter of uncontrolled ruffianism,—between ourselves and the



French or the Americans,—we again found ourselves involved in similar difficulties. To make any comparison of avail we should take the cities of Paris and New York, and ascertain whether in them life and property are less safe than in London. No other cities can afford ground for such comparison,—even if such is given by Paris and New York,—for the scoundrelism of the earth will of course gather itself together where wealth and numbers offer it the best chance of a livelihood. In the little town of Muzzlegoose on the Downs, with which we are connected, street violence is unknown, although a Muzzlegoose butcher was hung some years back for sticking his knife into a young woman who would not become his sweetheart. When we were in the thick of these inquiries there came to be that ill-timed march of militiamen through the north of London, and they who are loudest in pointing out to us that we have fallen upon bad and violent times had a great deal to say about that. The roughs seem to have had a day of it, and though we again could not find any personal acquaintance who had materially suffered, no doubt a great many ruffians had been enabled to come together, and to set the police for a time at defiance. But it occurred to us that even within our own time there had been rows of a much worse description both in Paris and in New York ;—rows which must have gone much further in making the timid portion of the population afraid to walk abroad. Nor did it seem to us to alter the case that these French and American rows had formed themselves on a basis of political feeling. We thought, indeed, that it was the same with us,—only that here the political feeling of the people is so much less obdurate, less hostile, less unconvinced, less spasmodically successful ;—and on that account so much more malleable and easily governed than it is in Paris or New York ! And, moreover, if your head be broken, or your purse stolen, it matters little to you whether the injury came from uncontrolled political, or uncontrolled non-political, ruffianism. What does matter is that the ruffianism should be brought under control ; and it seems to us that that which is non-political is more easily handled, is more manifestly made odious to the eyes of the multitude, is more quickly made to appear as a thing clearly damnable and injurious to all concerned in it, than that which strives to make itself respectable with the excuse of politics.

But we will confess that all that had been said of the insecurity of London had made us fear that we could not hold up our heads in this matter of police control against our French neighbours. Of the rowdiness of New York we have always entertained so strong a conviction, that we have never feared a comparison there ; but was it the fact that Paris was more orderly than London ? Statistics appeared from time to time which seemed to show that, at any rate, as regards England and France, and therefore, doubtless, as regards London and Paris also, serious criminality was much more prevalent with us than

with them. This was very terrible to us, and seemed to go so far towards proving the correctness of that sensational but uncomfortable view of the matter, which would teach us to believe that we English are all gradually tumbling into a great Golgotha of crime, in which the innocent will be eaten up and swallowed by the criminals. We were almost in despair on this matter, when there came out a most startling but comfortable article in the *Pall Mall Gazette*,—see the paper of 28th November last,—laden with statistics, all of which show conclusively, if statistics can ever be conclusive, that we are at any rate not worse than our neighbours. And there is here also a direct comparison between London and Paris. In London the summary convictions in a year were 58,849, as placed against 85,690 in Paris, with probably nearly a third less of population. In London, indeed, the convictions for drunkenness and disorderly conduct exceeded those in Paris for similar offences by nearly five to one. This is very bad, and should be looked to. But we are inclined to think that the men and women taken up for being drunk do more harm to themselves than to their neighbours.

Finding ourselves thus somewhat bewildered by the statistics which we had collected on the subject, and thinking that, as far as we understood them, or could, as we say, digest them, they tended rather to show us how quiet and safe our streets are than the reverse, we resolved upon applying ourselves to that rule of thumb which we have attempted to explain in the opening lines of this short essay. We had been told that we ought to stir no whither after nightfall in the streets of London without carrying with us, at the least, a huge knobstick wherewith to assail, on the instant, any garrotter by whom we might be attacked;—whereas it is our custom and our comfort to be accompanied by a somewhat soft and ancient umbrella, which we love well. Moreover, though we do not know that we are lacking in proper manly vigour, we doubt our own alacrity with that knobstick. And as for a revolver, which has been suggested, we are free to acknowledge that the danger of being garrotted, if it were assured to us, would loom less to us than that which we should anticipate from walking about with a loaded pistol in our own pockets. They who take delight in wandering about through strange lands, among lions, savages, and nomadic thieving tribes, whose business it is to go hither and thither with their lives in their hands,—they may look upon the proposed state of constant preparation under arms as one of pleasurable excitement; but for us, who are accustomed to regard the security of our pockets and persons as an affair of the police,—to us, such suggestions are more terrible than the evils supposed to be so general. If that be necessary, then,—for us,—farewell London! And it has been very generally pointed out to us, that if we do venture out at nights, we should walk ever in the middle of the streets, as far as may be from skulking corners, and that we should walk quick and

watchful, remembering ever that we are in the midst of rampant, uncontrolled ruffianism. As we thought of these plain, and certainly cheap instructions, it appeared to us that we were too old to alter habits long adopted. On an occasion or two we might remember to rush down the centre of Great Russell Street as we made our way home Bloomsbury-wards, returning from the mild dissipation of our club. But it is our wont to saunter listlessly along, thinking of the Magazine, thinking of our articles, thinking often of an ungrateful,—sometimes, too, of a grateful public. The streets which are very pleasant to us would cease to give us pleasure if it became needful for us to be ever on our guard,—to hurry along, looking over our shoulders to the right and to the left, mindful always of the cudgel in our hands. And then, too, as to that proposal that we should carry with us, in these our night-rambles, no watch and no money, we demur to it altogether. Our wants are not heavy, but we like to go prepared for the perhaps necessary cab,—for the little supper arrangement which may, perchance, be suggested to us,—for that loan of half-a-crown which it is possible that our friend may require of us. We decline altogether to denude ourselves of our slightly-stocked purse, and will even continue to carry with us the means of knowing at what hour we insert our latch-key in the lock, so that feminine vigilance,—ever watchful on our behoof,—may not find us without an answer in the morning.

Thus, in doubt and suffering, we applied ourselves to what we will call the rule of thumb, and made personal inquiry as to the damages which had accrued to those whom we could approach at first, at second, or even at third hand. The result has been to assure us that we need not look for the knobstick, and that we may go mooning along the pavements,—as we have done every day for the last thirty years. And we venture to think that, after all, this mode of inquiry is the most efficacious for those who want to bring home a truth to themselves for their own guidance and conduct in life. Statistics must, as we have said, be knocked hither and thither, and sifted, and pulled to pieces, and digested, before a plain man can use them for his private purposes. A Chancellor of the Exchequer can regulate the expenses of the nation by statistics, but the gentleman who has two hundred and fifty pounds per annum for the maintenance of himself and family will find that he can stretch his money much further by the rule of thumb, well administered, than he can do by the use of any statistics. And then, too, the public statements, which meet us loudly in the newspapers from time to time, cautioning us against this horror and against that, are apt to delude us much if we accept them without the necessary grain of salt. If all these cautions were taken by the letter, in whom or in what could we trust? Is not every justice a nincompoop? Is not every man in office either a knave or an idler? Are not our clergy a poor, weak

set of drivellers? Are not our tradesmen pilferers, our merchants swindlers, our doctors quacks, our scholars shallow, and our servants slatternly hirelings? Alas! we know that, in the general, such is the case,—guided to that knowledge by the oft-repeated cautions of our daily and weekly monitors. But for ourselves, when we proceed to administer that rule of thumb,—when we come to judge of the neighbouring magistrate who is so kind to us; of the Post Office clerk who is our friend; of the dear vicar who lives near us, and whom we almost adore; of that excellent fellow, Brisket, who has never refused us credit in our sorest need; of our great and beneficent neighbour from the Lombard Street firm who gives coals in winter to all the paupers around us; of the hard-worked practitioner who feels our pulses at a most moderate pecuniary remuneration; of our young cousin who has just been elected a fellow; and of the neat, light-handed Phillis who waits upon us so deftly,—for ourselves, we say, when we thus measure our own little world by gauge of thumb, we find that we are surrounded by an extremely honest set of fellows.

Having, therefore, after our own fashion, measured the ruffianism of London in our own scales, and by our own weights, we decline to recognise any necessity for altering our usual mode of living. And even though we were throttled in consequence in the course of the coming winter, we do not think that our readers should accept that as any evidence that our observations are unfounded.

---

## BUSINESS AT THE PRESENT DAY.

---

It is hardly too much to say that even the least observant readers of the daily papers must be aware of a great change which has of late years come over the commerce of this country. That all those who have noted this fact should be able to tell why, wherefore, and in what measure it has been brought about, would be absurd to expect; but that there has been a falling off in the character of our trading relations amongst ourselves, that abroad our credit and our great name for business integrity are not what they were, and still less what they ought to be, few who mix with their fellow men, and are even ordinarily quick to observe passing events, can have failed to remark. Indeed, has not the truth, in one respect, been brought home to most of us? How many families in the land are there who have not—either in their own persons or in those of their near relatives—suffered more or less from the mania, which was so prevalent for a time, of investing money in joint-stock company undertakings? Such speculations are in every sense of the word commercial, and the collapse of so many hundreds of them was nothing more than the result of the general recklessness in business which has latterly in another way so completely paralysed the trade of England. Of the fact that commerce is for the time paralysed, what stronger confirmation do we need than the City articles of the Times, the Daily News, or any other of the leading journals of London, Manchester, or the other great commercial towns of the kingdom? Money was never more plentiful than at the present day. The banks cry aloud for customers to borrow their thousands, tens of thousands, and millions, at two per cent. All that they ask is to receive fair commercial securities, and their wealth is at the disposition of those who will take it, to work with,—to manipulate, to turn over, to increase twenty, thirty, or fiftyfold. But the difficulty is to find those “fair commercial securities.” When there is little or no trade, there are few or no good bills of exchange floating; and where such do not exist there must be a stand-still in business, an utter want of the lawful enterprise which is needful to develop the commerce of a country. But still the question remains to be answered, what has caused such an utter—and what is more important, such a very prolonged—stagnation in the trade of England; and when, if ever, is such a state of things likely to end?

The commercial business of this country may be divided under two principal heads—that of Trade and that of Finance. For our present

inquiry we will examine these separately, taking first all that which comes under the head of Trade—the business and calling of merchants; and afterwards, what may be denominated Finance, or that which applies to all purely monetary transactions, and in which are included banking operations, joint-stock company speculations, or the like.

And, first, as to Trade. What has caused the total prostration of this branch of commerce? what has occasioned its prolonged depression, lengthened on from week to week and from month to month, far beyond what in former days was caused by even the most severe commercial crisis? The reply to this question may be condensed in the words with which we have headed this paper, “business at the present day.” It is the business of the present day, or rather the mode by which that business is conducted, which has caused all the evils under which trade is at present suffering; and until the system which we shall presently try to illustrate shall have ceased to exist, there can be little or no hopes that prosperity, which in business is the eldest child of credit, will ever return to mercantile England.

In former times—in days when men now barely of middle age were already fighting the battle of life—if you wished to be a merchant,—to commence business,—it was deemed essential that you should have not only some commercial training, but that you should be possessed of capital more or less adequate to the wants of the commerce in which you were about to engage. We remember the period—not more than twenty-five years ago—when a young man who had served his five or seven years in a mercantile house, and who could command a capital of five or six thousand pounds, would have been thought foolhardy to begin business on his own account, except in a very small way, and that chiefly on commission, in which the risks of loss are comparatively small. In those days, for any one to write himself down a merchant, and not have the means at command to meet any loss which, humanly speaking, he might at any moment incur, would have been looked upon as nothing short of swindling; and the individual found out risking in such transactions the money of those who confided in his integrity, would have been regarded as a kind of commercial “welcher,”—a man who bets high, who takes all he wins, but who, when luck turns against him, leaves those to whom he owes money to look for his whereabouts. But how is it now? How do hundreds of men, preparing to commence trading, get the capital on which to begin? Their method is simple and easy in the extreme. Of course we do not for a moment intend to include in our condemnation the old honoured mercantile firms of England. That many such still exist, there can be no more doubt than of the fact that they hold themselves perfectly aloof from anything like trade “welching.” But unfortunately they are but few when compared with the hundreds of new mushroom houses that spring up daily in every direction. And the question then naturally arises—How is it

that these firms, which have no capital, manage to trade without the means on which to work?

Those persons who have not been behind the scenes of that great mercantile theatre called the City during the last three or four years, will find it extremely difficult to believe how much falsehood, how much paper credit, and how little substantial foundation, appertain to a vast number of our mercantile houses. Bank managers, bill-brokers, and the partners in the great discount houses in London, could make disclosures in this respect which would prove far more sensational reading than anything which has as yet appeared in the pages of our novels. Not that even the cleverest and most experienced of these gentlemen can always detect the rogue in the plausible so-called merchant; nor are they always able to distinguish the true metal from the mere electro-plated article, which often looks more valuable than the silver or gold which it is meant to copy. But the worst of the present condition of the trading world is the lowered—the greatly lowered—moral tone with which the influx of rascality has gradually leavened almost the whole mass of traders. Those who mix much with business men in private life will understand best what we mean. Of late years, even amongst merchants who commenced trade upon a bonâ-fide capital, there exists but too often a reckless spirit of adventure—based on the assumption that all commerce is now-a-days more or less dishonest, but that they must float with the stream—which is, to say the least of it, most painful to witness. We do not affirm that all commercial men have become rogues, but we maintain that unclean hands, slippery ways, and a general character of what Americans term “smartness” in business, are not looked upon with the same horror and detestation as they once were. A City man may in these days be known to be a rogue, his fellow-traders may be perfectly aware that he has done things which ought to have brought him before the Lord Mayor; but so long as he can hold his own, and put a fair face upon his questionable transactions, no man is bold enough to throw the first stone; and other so-called merchants of a like stamp, seeing how well he gets on, follow in his footsteps, and add to the number of those who have already succeeded to no small extent in ruining the commercial character which England has until lately enjoyed for integrity and honest dealing.

To illustrate our meaning with regard to the many firms that are endeavouring to make bricks without straw,—to make profits without any capital to work upon,—and which, under the pretext of trading, are really playing the—to them—profitable game of “heads I win, tails you lose,” we will relate two cases of business of the present day, both of which have recently come under the immediate observation of the present writer.

Some three or four years ago a Scotchman, whom for distinction we will call John Adams, arrived in London. He was a man in the prime



of life, but with a baldness of head and a decided tendency to grey in his whiskers which added greatly to the respectability of his appearance. In a financial point of view, this gentleman's antecedents were not favourable. As a young man he had served five or six years in one of the Scotch banks, and had left that employment to take a better-paid situation in a large Glasgow commission house. After ten or twelve years in the latter capacity he had, with a capital of five hundred pounds, commenced business on his own account; but at the end of two years had failed for about five thousand pounds. There had been some difficulty about getting over the process of whitewashing, which after considerable delay had been surmounted, and a relative had made him a present of one hundred pounds, advising him to proceed to Australia and commence life there as a squatter; in any case—such was the condition on which he was given the money—he was not to show himself north of the Tweed again for the next ten years. But Mr. Adams had considerable misgiving respecting the success he was likely to have as a sheep-farmer at the antipodes, and so he came to London, determined to set up for himself as a merchant.

His first act was to obtain, by some means or other, an introduction to a fourth-rate bank. In those days—we speak of two and a half or three years ago—there were many banks only too glad to secure customers, and who looked upon any one who opened an account with a hundred pounds as something to be proud of, and to be mentioned at the next board-day meeting. Having thus laid the foundation of “respectability” by being able to talk of “his bank” and “his banking account,” Mr. Adams hired a small office in the very centre of business-land, and had his name painted on the door, taking care to add the words “and Company.” “JOHN ADAMS AND COMPANY, MERCHANTS AND COMMISSION AGENTS,” looked well in Brook Court, and still better in the Post-Office Directory. The next thing was to get a couple of clerks without having to pay wages; and to obtain these, one pound of the hundred pounds’ capital was expended in advertisements, addressed to parents and guardians who wished a commercial training for their sons. Not only did our friend obtain the services of one young man gratis, but he actually had a premium of fifty pounds paid by the father of another; and no small addition did this sum make to his somewhat scanty capital. With five or six pounds spent upon second-hand office-furniture, about half as much upon ledgers, daybooks, and stationery, the office, with two clerks in the outer room, was complete, and Mr. Adams began to look around him for business.

Did he get any—was he able to trade or traffic in goods or produce? Of course he was. He went to Manchester, and bought for cash small parcels of prints suitable for the Constantinople market. These he shipped to a Greek firm in that city, drawing upon them for the

value, and obtaining in return orders to purchase other merchandise, as well as to sell sundry lots of madder roots, oil, and various articles produced in the East, which they consigned to his care. He was a man thoroughly well versed in all the details of business life, not a great talker, always well, but not loudly, dressed, and eminently "respectable" in his looks and habits. Little by little he got a business, the foundation of which was stamped paper; for it was by bills, and bills only, that he could live in a commercial sense. In the City he had a friend who did business on commission for an iron company; this friend accepted bills for him, and he returned the compliment. These documents were artistically got up, and bore all the appearance of bona-fide mercantile paper. If Mr. Adams, of the firm of John Adams and Company, walked into the manager's room of the Incontestable Bank, and offered for discount bills drawn by his own house upon Messrs. James Mincing and Co., Iron Brokers, of Jude Lane, and duly accepted by that firm, could the said manager of the Incontestable refuse to discount them? Not on any account: had he done so, his bank would at once have lost a customer. There was only one thing which the friends who thus played into each other's hands had to be careful of, which was that "the paper" of John Adams and Co. and that of James Mincing and Co. should never be offered for discount at the same establishment; and this was very easy indeed to avoid. And when to these two "dummy" firms was added a third—William and Peter Cracks, also Commission Agents—which accepted and drew bills, and helped the others, of course the transaction became all the more easy. Not to make too long a story, it is only needful to say that the second year our friend was in business in London he "turned over" twenty-five thousand pounds in the course of twelve months; and that when the smash came,—when the facilities for obtaining money upon flash bills ceased,—he "cracked up," as a Yankee would say, for upwards of sixty thousand pounds, and went through the Bankruptcy Court with flying colours. It is needless to say that of these sixty thousand pounds he is generally supposed to have quietly invested something very comfortable in Consols; and when business in the City gets brisker, he will be quite ready to begin again.

The second instance we shall give of business as done in the present day is that of a shipowner. This gentleman, who shall go by the name of Johns, began life as—and was until four or five years ago—a steward of a large passenger steamer which "went foreign" out of an English provincial port. He had saved about three hundred pounds, and having married, aspired to be something higher in the world than a mere head-waiter in a floating hotel. His wife's father was a retired and pensioned clerk of a large shipowner, and between these two relatives there was concocted a scheme which soon floated them into the ocean of wealth. They commenced by purchasing an old ship which was sold by auction for a mere trifle, some eight hundred pounds. Of

this they paid a third in cash, and gave a bond upon the ship, with an insurance policy in the event of her being lost, for the balance. How they found the means to provision or to man her, the god of credit and the spirit of mercantile accommodation bills alone can tell. It is enough for us to know that they not only did so, but that they also freighted her on Government account to one of the colonies, and that the advance they obtained for her hire was enough to clear off the debt still remaining upon her. In her second voyage—out and home to Bombay—they not only paid their expenses, but made a profit sufficient to enable them to purchase and pay in part for another vessel, which they also freighted to Government, and which they also soon freed from debt. Had their operations ceased here, they might still have paid their way, and even have made a modest living out of the two ships they owned. But about the time of which we write the mania for speculations in cotton was at its height, and these ship-owners went largely into that most risky trade. In order to obtain funds with which to pay for the cotton they bought, they mortgaged their vessels to their full value. So long as prices kept up all went well; but when cotton which they had bought in Egypt at from one and sixpence to two shillings a pound, could hardly be sold in London for eightpence, they, as a matter of course, were unable to meet their engagements; and after struggling on for a short season, went into the Bankruptcy Court to get rid of more than fifty thousand pounds' worth of debts and liabilities, all of which had to be borne by, and were a dead loss to, some person or persons somewhere in the mercantile world.

Are these two instances,—both of them actual facts, as we said before, which have occurred within the knowledge of the present writer, and are told exactly as they happened in all respects except that the names are changed,—are these two instances in any way exceptional? are they selected because they are extraordinary and out-of-the-way cases of mercantile recklessness? By no means. SAINT PAULS MAGAZINE might be filled with similar instances of men without a shilling of capital to begin upon doing a large business, and failing for fabulous sums. Nor are English men of business by any means the cleverest adepts at this work. To do foreigners—and particularly Greeks, Levantines, and all the various trading classes that hail from the East—but justice, the grand discovery of working and trading upon bills, and bills only, was made in classic lands. It is a means of commerce which was first invented in the Levant, and only of late years brought to a certain degree of perfection in England. The results of this art we are now enjoying, but we cannot claim to be the original discoverers of the science. Like many other luxuries, it came originally from the East; and the following story will show how it has been worked in this country by those who brought it with them from other countries.

Some years ago there came to Liverpool a Greek gentleman who set up in business as the correspondent of two firms—one at Constantinople, the other at Alexandria. The house he established in England went by the name of Messrs. Acapullos and Co. ;\* that at Constantinople was called Acapullos Brothers; and the one at Alexandria, Spesa and Acapullos. Of these names, all save the one name in each house was nothing more than a pleasant fiction. The one only partner in the three houses was Mr. Demetrius Acapullos, the enterprising individual who had come to Liverpool, taken an office, and written himself down Acapullos and Company. In due time this gentleman commenced to buy what are called Manchester goods suitable for the Levantine markets. He was wary and cautious in his dealings, and evidently extremely grasping in his desire to make good bargains. But so far from causing him to be thought any the worse of, these peculiarities only made the Manchester manufacturers and spinners believe him to be a man who had money, and was anxious to turn it to the best possible advantage. In Manchester it is the custom to pay for goods fourteen days after delivery; but many purchasers avail themselves of the discount allowed for cash, and pay for what they buy on receipt. Mr. Acapullos followed the latter plan, which had not only the advantage of giving him greater profit, but made those he dealt with believe him to be a man with considerable funds at command.

It soon became known to those who cared to inquire concerning his means that Mr. Acapullos used to receive remittances from abroad, and that both by specie shipped from Alexandria to Liverpool, and by bankers' or other good bills from Constantinople, his balance at the bank where he kept his account was always maintained at a highly respectable figure. All this increased his local credit. Once put a mercantile firm upon the proper groove, and it will run as quickly and as smoothly towards the terminus of a good name as it otherwise does upon that railway of discredit which leads to insolvency. Demetrius knew this: he acted in conformity with his knowledge. And we would draw particular notice to the manner in which he put himself in funds,—a method simple in the extreme, of purely Hellenic origin, but which of late years has found many imitators in England amongst English merchants of the lower class, and which has been one of the great, if not the one great, reason of the present collapse of credit in the mercantile world. "Don't talk to me about capital," a French mercantile adventurer once said to the present writer, who shared a cabin with him from Marseilles to Constantinople some years ago,— "don't talk to me of capital! It is the bugbear of you Englishmen. With good management, pen, ink, and bill-stamps (*papier timbré*), a man of business ought to have at his command any amount of capital

\* Although the anecdote is strictly true, we need hardly say that this name, like all the others in this paper, is purely fictitious.

he requires." Demetrius Acapulós had evidently heard of, and had appreciated, this maxim.

Demetrius was not a man of capital, but he was a man of business. The firms at Constantinople and Alexandria were, as we have said before, mere dummies; they had no real partners, but were simply conducted by clerks who were cousins and brothers of the mastermind at Liverpool, and entirely under his directions. When he wanted money he advised one or other of those houses,—say, that at Constantinople,—the manager of which immediately drew upon the house at Alexandria, discounted the bill of exchange, and transmitted the proceeds to Liverpool, either in specie or bankers' bills. Nor was this difficult to effect. Messrs. Acapulós Brothers, of Constantinople, being known to have branch houses at Alexandria and in Liverpool, and being able to show letters authorising them to draw upon one or other of these firms, found no difficulty in selling their bills. The house on which they invariably drew, as a matter of course, accepted their drafts, no matter to what amount; and when these were about to fall due, they put themselves in funds by drawing on another house of the same partnership. To make this very simple transaction the clearer to non-mercantile minds, we will say that when A wanted money he drew upon B, and when B had to pay the bill he drew upon C, who to obtain funds drew again upon A, and thus the game went round. So long as money was plentiful, credit easy, and there were not too many "firms" who did business in this way, all went smooth, and the profits were immense, the more so as all the money coming in was interest upon no capital whatever: the system was a gold mine, a veritable California, without the fatigue of hard labour, or the danger of a bad climate. At one time Messrs. Acapulós and Company, of Liverpool, were "turning over" little short of three hundred thousand sterling per annum; and could not be making less than thirty to forty thousand a year clear profit. But unfortunately they could not preserve the monopoly of such a business. Other wise men came from the East, and set up in the same line. More and more followed in the same track. Not only Liverpool, but Manchester, Leeds, Bristol, and even London, by degrees became inundated with firms who conducted business on a similar paper basis. Many of our own countrymen were only too apt in learning this newly-found way of making bricks without straw, until mercantile men who really worked upon a capital of their own were the exception and not the rule.

The day of reckoning came slowly, but it came surely. When eighteen months ago the thaw came which melted into water the thin ice on which so many mushroom banks and discount companies were built, it was somewhat difficult for these concerns to get back their capital, for it had nearly all been lent upon paper which was not worth the stamps on which the bills were drawn. When a merchant

ships bona-fide goods to another country, and draws upon his correspondent or agent for the value of those goods, leaving a certain margin for the casualties of any depreciation which may take place in their value, the bills which he then puts into the market have an actual value. They represent the price of, or money paid for, the goods which he has sent off. This is legitimate trading, and until within the last ten or fifteen years, no other way of doing business was known in England. The illustrations of trading in the present day afforded by the anecdotes we have related, will afford some clue by which even non-business men can understand why our credit at home, and our good name abroad, are now things of the past.

And when to utter recklessness—not to call it worse—in trade, is added great extravagance in living, can we wonder at the present condition of commercial England, which, as the *Times* lately said, and said truly, “has no precedent in our financial history?”

If from what we may term the ordinary legitimate trade of the country we turn to the Joint Stock Company jobbery which for two or three years was the prevalent madness of England, we shall find additional reason for not being surprised at the utter want of credit which now exists. The history of this branch of speculation is unfortunately but too well known amongst all classes of the community, and the results, from which we are now suffering, are but the natural effects of the proceedings which in 1863-4 enriched a few rogues, and left so many confiding men and women to lament the money, and the comforts which money brings, now gone where last year's snow is.

And yet, can we absolve from blame that very public which has lost so much? Let us look our faults boldly in the face, and answer honestly the question whether “promoters” and other schemers and traders in the good faith of shareholders could ever have made the profits they did, if those who trusted in them had not been actuated by the enormous greed of gain, which has been almost a disease amongst us for the last few years. Take, for instance, a class that is said to have suffered in proportion to their numbers more than any other, by the rascalities of the joint stock company jobbers—namely, that of retired pensioned Indian officers, civil as well as military. All these gentlemen may be said to have had the means to live in comfort, some even in luxury. They all had pensions earned by years of hard toil in the land of heat and fevers. But they were not content with their modest incomes. No sooner did the Limited Liability Act come into full play, than, to use a vulgar but expressive phrase, they “went in for it” with a vigour and an earnestness—we may with justice add a recklessness—which has now reaped its fruit. And in proportion as they risked their own property, they induced others to risk theirs. Thrice happy was Robert Macaire—the fashionably dressed, smart spoken, vulgar promoter of the *Invincible Financial Banking Company, Limited*—if he could get Major-General Dupeman, late

Deputy Adjutant-General at Berhampore, to "join the direction" of that excellent undertaking. Not only was the unfortunate officer plucked bare of every feather on his body, but he afterwards served as a decoy-duck by which others were induced to join the same concern. Dupeman was known to be an honest, honourable, simple-minded soldier. Of business he knew nothing beyond how to make his income and his expenditure tally at the end of the year. He believed all that Mr. Macaire told him. He became a director of the *Invincible*, and thereby induced Brown, the ex-judge of Palampore, and Jones, formerly magistrate at Goernuggur, to do the same. Seeing these well-known names on the direction, Robinson, and Smith, and Mrs. Wilson the widow, and Smalls the retired chaplain, took shares in the concern, and until the smash came, they believed that they were getting a fabulous percentage on the money they had paid for their shares. The result we all know. Dupeman, instead of living in London on £2,000 a-year, is vegetating at St. Malo upon £150; Brown has had to go through the Bankruptcy Court; Jones is in hiding from his creditors; Mrs. Wilson has opened a lodging-house in Brompton; and Smalls was last week arrested and put into White-cross Street. We may, and we do, pity greatly all these people, but did not the universal greed for money—or rather the belief of being able to make money without capital—cause all this misery? The mania, we grant, was almost universal, so much so that it was difficult to avoid catching the infection. But did not those who caught it suffer from their own determination to gain money without labour and without capital, a thing which, as a rule, no man ever yet did—although now and then there have been exceptions—without paying the penalty.

But in the long history of the cheating, which is comprised in the financial history of the past three years, there is nothing half so astonishing as what a late parliamentary return has brought to light. To take up in detail the company-creation work of 1864 and 1865, would be but to repeat a story which every one has heard again and again. We all know how scheme upon scheme, imposition upon imposition, and swindle upon swindle, followed each other in close succession. Few can forget—many of us, indeed, have sad cause to remember—how one after another of these undertakings collapsed, were knocked down, and fell like so many nine-pins, to be carried away and chopped up for firewood, with which solicitors, official liquidators, accountants, and other functionaries, were to warm their houses and make merry. All this we know had happened, but few of us thought it was still going on. Most persons thought that with the fall of Overend, Gurney, and Co., the joint stock company mania received its death-blow. But a recently printed return from the Board of Trade has completely dispersed this idea. So far from the manufactory of joint stock companies having stopped, it appears to be going on almost as incessantly as before. Between the



1st June, 1866, and the 31st of May, 1867, no fewer than 543 new companies were registered, and of these 539 were formed under the Limited Liability Act. It would, however, be wrong to say that all these 543 undertakings were mere financial bubbles, although the exceptions are certainly few. Some of the nominally new schemes are merely the resuscitation of old companies, which were brought down last year more by the systematic working of the "bears" on the Stock Exchange than by any intrinsic weakness of their own. But notwithstanding this, a very large proportion of the new companies are the wildest speculations it is possible to conceive; and the fact that of the 543, upwards of 150 appear to have no offices at all, and only about as many more have offices within five miles of the General Post-Office, shows that a vast majority of these new schemes are merely biding their time until the present distrust has died away, and hope at some future period to spring into existence as full-blown absorbers of money. But it is not the less a bad omen for the future to find that, far from being dead, the spirit of illegitimate speculation is only sleeping, and is ready, with all its many swindles ready cut and dried, to reassume its old function as a means not only of ruining those who trust in it, but also of encouraging speculators without means to again "try their luck" at the gambling-tables, where shares are used in the same way as counters are on the green-cloth tables of Homburg or Baden.

What is the remedy for this state of things? When may we expect it to come to an end? When may we look to see trade and finance resuming their legitimate kind of business? These questions are not easy to answer without extending this paper far beyond its proper limits. This much, however, may be safely assumed, that the cure for the present depressed state of commerce does not lie so much with the legislature, as with the merchants of England themselves. There are no laws half so efficient in repressing the evils which affect a class as the rules and regulations made by those who are by position the leading men of that class. The honourable merchants, the legitimate speculators, and the solvent banks in this country, are of themselves more than powerful enough so to rule and regulate trade, as to make it very difficult for the mere adventurer without funds to enter their circle and play at the game at which, if he wins, the gains are his, while if he loses the loss falls on his neighbours who trust him. Surely if bakers, butchers, wine merchants, and other tradesmen can combine in what are called Trade Associations, for the purpose of preventing would-be swindling customers from obtaining credit to which they are not entitled, merchants and bankers might very easily enter into similar unions, by which men who have neither means nor character to trade should be prevented from doing so; while rules might be made by which no manufacturer would sell them anything unless for cash, no banker discount their bills, no

broker buy goods or sell produce on their account. The guilds and city companies of older days were originally constituted for the very purpose of keeping trade free from those who had no right to traffic because they had not the means of doing so; and to something of the same sort we shall have to revert, in order to restore commercial credit to its proper state. For our merchants now to do this as one body would be impossible, for the simple reason, that where there was formerly one, there are now forty or fifty traders. But there is no reason why it should not be done by Commercial Clubs, or Chambers of Commerce. There might very easily be enacted rules by which no person should be considered a merchant unless he belonged to an association of the kind; and each such body could be considered responsible for the respectability of its own members, and obliged to ascertain, before they admitted any one into their body, that he had something more than what bill-brokers call "mere pig-upon-bacon"\* paper as a capital to trade upon. These, of course, are but suggestions roughly thrown out; but there can be no doubt that if business in England is ever to resume and preserve the character it formerly enjoyed, and if ever capitalists can hope to find a legitimate outlet for their millions now lying idle, something must be done to surround commerce with a hedge strong enough to keep out swindling adventurers who have no more right to compete in trade with *bonâ-fide* merchants, than a man without money has to demand change for a ten-pound note, or than an individual would have to draw a cheque upon a bank in which he has no funds.

\* "Pig-upon-bacon" bills are drafts such as Mr. Acapulco drew, which although *apparently* drawn upon, and accepted by another party, are *really* drawn upon the individual who draws them.

---

## WEARY NOVEMBER.

---

If one might choose one's rest, I would choose  
Sleep, that never is troubled or stirred,—  
Folded hands, 'neath the grass and the dews  
And the soft song of a bird.

Rest from love,—as bitter as sweet,—  
From ghostly doubtings of faith and trust ;  
With my heart, once racked with a restless beat,  
Only a pinch of dust.

Rest from the labour, that comes to nought,  
From the tender anguish of poets' songs ;  
Rest from the hunger and drought of thought,  
And the sight of others' wrongs.

Only, as there I slept in my cell,  
I must have in my cold hand, closely prest,  
The hand of the one who loves me well,—  
Or that sleep would not be rest.

If one might choose one's rest, I would choose  
Sleep, where a tear's drop is not heard,  
Where one does not know what it is to lose—  
Even a dog or a bird.

T. H.

## OUR FORTIFICATIONS.

---

On the north side of the Thames' mouth, subtended by the Nore and Sheerness, and imbedded in the Essex flat, stretches the dreary waste of marsh, sand, and turf of which few of our readers can fail to have heard under its now famous name of Shoeburyness. Nowhere along the indented and extended coast-line of the British Isles can a spot naturally more desolate be found. Neither to agriculturist, botanist, ornithologist, conchologist, nor entomologist does the vicinity of Shoeburyness offer any of those congenial attractions which the sea-coast elsewhere commonly boasts. During three-fourths of the year a searching and penetrating sea-wind sweeps over the inhospitable surface of the waste, and lops the heads of the marsh grass as it were with the blade of a knife. Here, and perhaps here alone, in the county of Essex, Mr. Mechi would forswear his optimist views as to the possibility of raising a profitable crop. Not a page would Mr. Philip Henry Gosse here add to his "Manual of Marine Zoology," or to his elaborate "History of British Sea Anemones." Let Mr. Hewitson's ardour in collecting shells and birds'-nests be what it may, there is nothing which would tempt him to linger long at Shoeburyness in the hope of adding fresh specimens of butterflies or lepidoptera to his already unrivalled collections. Nor would the indefatigable patience and investigating zeal of Mr. George Henry Lewes long fortify him in his search for eye of newt and toe of frog, against the disenchanting influences which would here surround him.

Nevertheless, the very unfitness of Shoeburyness for other avocations and recreations has led to its selection as the spot where the great duel between the attacking and defensive forces of modern times should be fought out. Be our shortcomings in guns and armour-plates what they may, no other nation has hitherto expended one-tenth of the money in gunnery experiments, and in testing the power of resistants, which, with true wisdom and economy, we have already devoted at Shoeburyness to these tentative rehearsals of war. In spite of the bloody and exciting stimulation supplied to them by four unparalleled years of strife, our Transatlantic cousins did not commence their experiments with heavy guns against various kinds of armour-plated fortifications until long after the actual fighting had ceased. It is now about fourteen months since a Board of United States army officers, of which Generals Barnard, Gilmore, and Brewerton were the chief members, commenced their experiments at Fortress Monroe. In their

gunnery practice of 1866, which was of an incomplete character, the Americans fastened plates of wrought iron in front of the section of a fort, and discharged guns of a heavy calibre at these iron plates. To quote the words of the *Times'* accurate American correspondent, "nearly every shot penetrated, and some went entirely through the protecting plates of iron 4 inches thick, and only a few shots were fired before the granite wall behind the plates, varying from 8 feet to 12 feet in thickness, and strengthened with stout iron girders and bolts, became a crumbling ruin." It is worthy of remark that, as we shall presently show, our own experiments of the resisting power of granite are singularly in harmony with the American experiments of 1866 at Fortress Monroe. Much more extensive preparations have been made for the American experiments of 1867, and it is possible that before these words meet the public eye, detailed accounts of the results attained will have been transmitted across the Atlantic. But we observe with satisfaction that the same professional jealousy which recently induced our own Royal Engineers to conceal a demolished target behind a thick tarpaulin is at least as rife among the Americans as among ourselves. Strict orders have been issued by the American Government that no information on the subject of the gunnery trials shall be communicated to the public in advance of the official report which is expected by their War Department. Nevertheless, nothing would surprise us less than to find that some American journal is no less outspoken and accurate about the Fortress Monroe experiments than was our own *Standard* in the description which its correspondent, although forbidden to be present, gave of the trial to which one of Colonel Inglis's iron shields was subjected at Shoeburyness.

The value of the experience which we have gained at Shoeburyness has, as we have already said, not been thrown away upon the Americans. The additional care and expense which they have bestowed upon their Fortress Monroe experiments of 1867 are well worthy of notice, and demand a few words of further comment. In addition to the combinations of stone, brickwork, and iron upon which they experimented in 1866, they have erected sections of three forts for trial in 1867. These sections of forts represent three casemates, one belonging to Fortress Monroe, a second to Fort Carroll, and a third to Fort Wool,—the last two forts being situated near the mouth of Chesapeake Bay,—and have been selected for trial because they are portions of the three strongest works upon the North American continent. The casemates have been constructed with the greatest accuracy, and the varieties of stone and cement employed in the original works have been reproduced in the imitations. The walls vary from 7 feet to 12 feet in thickness, and the average breadth and height of the surfaces exposed to the guns are about 24 square feet. Plates of wrought iron 4 inches thick coat the whole exterior face. No estimate of the outlay expended upon this work has ever entered into the calcu-

lation of its constructors, who, with true American magnificence, take more heed to secure valuable results than to count the cost of the operation. Targets to ascertain the exact range of the guns, and electric facilities for gauging the initial velocity of the shots, are not wanting. Moreover, in addition to these artificial casemates, a heavy cemented stone wall has been erected, with a cushion of sand, some 18 feet thick, strapped in front of it. We have recited enough about the intended experiments at Fortress Monroe to demonstrate that, before long, another trial-ground will claim as much attention, and be as pregnant with instruction for artillerists, as Shoeburyness itself.

Meanwhile, the visitor, if curious about guns and shields, will find plenty to repay him for his journey from the metropolis to the mouth of the Thames. Here may be seen, ranged out at sea, or in a line parallel to the coast, targets of iron varying in thickness, backed by all kinds of support, riddled with shot, bulged, cracked, riven, and penetrated, and altogether in seemingly deplorable plight. Separated from these targets, sometimes by a distance of 70 yards, sometimes of two miles, stand guns of every description, from the old-fashioned 68-pounder smooth-bore, recently esteemed the most formidable weapon that forts or ships could carry, up to the Armstrong rifled 600-pounder, or the huge American Rodman smooth-bore, 15 inches in calibre. Stretched across between the target and the gun when a trial takes place may be seen fine gossamer wires, placed at even distances from each other, which, being lacerated by the shot in its passage, record through the marvellous agency of electricity the precise velocity at which it speeds upon its way, and thus enable us to calculate the force of the crushing blow which the target will receive. Mark that granite ruin which stands as a perpetual monument of the explosion of a theory which, until the 15th and 16th of November, 1865, had gained a firm footing in the minds of the Iron Plate and Ordnance Select Committee, and of the favoured engineers attached to the War Department itself. Previous to that date it was believed that a combination of granite and iron was the Eureka which would give security to our land forts. At a cost of £8,000, the War Department erected at Shoeburyness a structure embodying their most approved notions of the latest development of military engineering. It consisted of two artificial granite casemates with two embrasures let into them, and protected with iron shields. The granite casemates were, in substance, a solid stone wall 14 feet in thickness, and with 2 feet of brickwork behind the granite. Of the two embrasures, the eastern or larger was fitted with a built-up shield, and the western or smaller with a solid plate of iron 13½ inches thick. The built-up shield, invented by Mr. Chalmers, had a front plate of 4 inches thick, and a backing of thin iron plates 8 inches deep. With their habitual precipitation, our Royal Engineers, before testing this granite structure, jumped to the conclusion that all our great national defences

were to be constructed on this plan, and that the works at Spit-head, Plymouth, and all over England, to say nothing of our colonies, were to consist of iron strapped upon granite. Extensive contracts for granite, with a view to pushing on our defensive works all round the globe, were hastily entered into. Unfortunately, the combination-of-iron-with-granite theory received, upon the 15th and 16th of November, 1865, its final sentence of doom. The casemates were rendered untenable after the first ten rounds, and when eighty rounds had been discharged at them with projectiles none of which reached 300 pounds in weight, the whole work became a disintegrated ruin. From that moment it became abundantly apparent that, in conformity with the already declared opinions of Todleben, Brialmont, and Niel, nothing but solid iron was available for employment in first-class permanent forts, and in sites too straitened to admit of the construction of earthworks, or exposed to the wash of the waves.

The subject of our fortifications, ventilated as it has been in the public press, is one which has excited very general interest, not only in the army and navy, but also in both Houses of Parliament, and in the country at large. Nothing is more unfounded than the belief, inculcated by some shallow and short-sighted military engineers, that the science of military engineering is one concerning which civilians of ordinary intelligence are incapable of forming an opinion. It is beyond a peradventure that there are in these islands scores of civilians whose whole lives have been spent in managing iron foundries, and who understand the manipulation, texture, and adaptation of wrought and cast iron far more thoroughly than Sir John Burgoyne, or Sir William Denison, or any of their professional underlings. Nothing is so much to be desired in the true interest of the nation at large as that it shall be conceded that the whole question of our national fortifications is not to be the monopoly of military men. Our Royal Artillerymen are the first to exclaim against our Royal Engineers when it is found that casemates and shields, designed to protect gunners, are, in fact, nothing but man-traps. Such being the case, it is impossible that public attention can be too forcibly drawn to the paramount importance of enlisting in the service of the State the best talent, both military and civilian, which is available for the purpose of rightly directing the large outlay upon permanent fortifications which the House of Commons has sanctioned.

From the moment in which it became possible, through the aid of steam flotillas, to throw large armies upon our shores at different points within a few hours, instead of within a few days, the subject of our coast defences has assumed increasing importance. The introduction of the new rifled cannon, the knowledge that the city of Charleston was riddled with projectiles discharged from guns situated four and a half miles from the spot where their shells burst, and the formidable power of iron-plated ships carrying the heaviest



guns, while they are themselves absolutely invulnerable at 400 yards to the strongest ordnance designed for any of our forts, lend to this whole question of our national defences an almost dramatic interest. In old times we did not consider ourselves safe unless our navy was at least a match for all the fleets of the great Powers combined. In these days of iron-clads it is scarcely possible for us to keep armoured ships to be pitted against all the other armoured ships which France, the United States, and Russia, if in combination, might bring against us. For these reasons, it is quite clear that if, in time of war, the enemy could obtain command of the Channel for even 100 hours, we might have to meet on our own shores several foreign armies perfectly equipped, the aggregate of which would far outnumber all our regular soldiers and militia combined. If it were possible to fortify the whole of our coast so that an enemy could nowhere land without considerable delay, we might be considered in a secure position. But when it is remembered that the southern and eastern coast-line of England stretches for 750 miles from the Humber to Penzance, including 350 miles in the aggregate where a landing may be effected, it is obvious that such a series of fortifications cannot be seriously contemplated. The whole subject was referred by Lord Palmerston's Government, in 1859, to a commission of distinguished officers, who made an elaborate report, which was presented to Parliament in 1860. In it they recommended that vital spots along the coast, such as our arsenals and dockyards at Portsmouth, Plymouth, Pembroke, Sheerness, and elsewhere, should be protected, not only by permanent fortifications covering them from an attack by sea, but also by land forts, covering them from an attack en revers by land, conducted by an enemy who had disembarked at some unprotected spot. It was obviously the design of the Royal Commissioners of 1859 to protect, let us say, Portsmouth from being shelled by ships at sea, or by siege guns erected upon Portsdown Hill. The recommendations of this report, although costly, were sensible, if viewed in the light which then illuminated its authors, and, having been warmly championed by Lord Palmerston, they were adopted by Parliament to the tune of nearly £11,000,000.

It appears from a Parliamentary Return of 26th March, 1867, that up to January 1st, 1867, seventy-one works of different kinds had actually been commenced, and an outlay of nearly £7,000,000 up to that time incurred. Few less cheering or reassuring studies await any patriotic Englishman than an investigation as to what portion of those seven millions has been profitably, and what portion unprofitably, spent. It is hardly necessary to remark that, since the Report of 1860 was made public, vast advances have been made in the power of guns, and in the density of iron armour-plates. Further commissions and committees have consequently become necessary, and have reconsidered the same subject in all its bearings, with the advantage of the new lights

obtained from experiments at Shoeburyness and in actual war. A body of scientific officers, called the Iron Plate Committee, have tested the new guns, with their multiform projectiles, against the constantly increasing strength of the targets devised by our skilled workers in iron. The American war, with all the lessons taught by the original conflict between the Monitor and Merrimac, and with all the experiences gained at Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, New Orleans, Galveston, and Vicksburg, has been studied with interest, though not with close attention, and its teachings have been more or less utilised. The battle of Lissa has contributed a valuable chapter of experience. Under the strong momentum imparted to public opinion by the American and German wars, and by the sense of our own insecurity, there is little to surprise us in the fact that giant strides have been made both in the powers of offence and defence. Some idea may be given of the prodigious force with which massive bolts are now hurled, when it is recorded that a shot of 150 pounds has been fired at a velocity of 2,010 feet per second, or, in other words, at the rate of 22 miles in a minute. The intensity of the shock with which a chilled projectile driven at this velocity must strike upon a given object needs not to be enforced. Sir William Armstrong has constructed a rifled gun which carries a shot about 500 pounds in weight, while the Americans are busy with a smooth-bore which is to deliver a projectile weighing more than 1,000 pounds. There is little doubt that we shall soon possess ordnance which will pierce the 9 inches of the Hercules at close quarters, and will riddle the 4½ inches of the Warrior at a distance of nearly 2 miles. On the other hand, Sir John Brown has successfully rolled armour-plates up to 15 inches of solid iron, and his example will soon be followed by other firms. It will thus be seen that we have neither ascertained the limit of the force which a projectile may attain, nor have we gauged the ultimate thickness of the defensive armour which is to coat our land forts. The only clearly-defined limit which we appear to be approaching is the weight of iron armour which the flotation of our sea-going broadside ships will enable them to carry.

The recommendation of the Royal Commissioners in 1860, that the defence of our dockyards against sea-attack should be confided to a combined system of forts and floating batteries, has been fiercely assailed by several distinguished officers, who advocate the employment of floating batteries alone. Two additional Reports, emanating from fresh commissioners, have, however, confirmed the wisdom of the views enunciated in 1860. The plan which is at present being carried out, is to erect advanced forts, invulnerable to attack, and self-supporting, which may command the sea to such a distance as to preclude an enemy's ship from lying within shelling range of a dockyard. In case the outer forts should be passed, other forts are being

constructed within, which are to continue the fight. These outer and inner forts, being built either upon land or at least upon solid foundations, admit of being coated with armour of any weight, and of carrying guns of any conceivable calibre. In spite of the famous dictum of Vauban that never yet was fort constructed which could not be taken, these forts are, in fact, intended to be impregnable. They are to be assisted by floating batteries, with a steam power of from 8 to 10 knots, mounting the heaviest guns and the heaviest armour, and somewhat resembling the American Monitors. These are intended to force an enemy's ship, should it pass the outer forts, to assume a position in which it will have to sustain such a concentrated fire from forts and floating batteries as will suffice to secure its destruction. This system, deliberately adopted by several consecutive commissions, and approved by Sir John Burgoyne, Inspector-General of Fortifications, seems not ill calculated to attain the object desired. But before it had been matured, a vast amount of money had already been spent, of which there can be little doubt that the larger proportion has been as recklessly wasted as the huge sums expended upon Cherbourg by the French, or upon Alderney by ourselves.

There is a certain type of mind which, if our foreign critics and detractors are to be believed, is habitually prevalent among Englishmen, and which leads men to think that, if there is danger to be faced, the best way of meeting it is by spending money. To this class the minds of Lords Palmerston and Herbert, enriched as they were with many valuable attributes, eminently belonged. Lord Palmerston never could be made to regard this question of erecting permanent fortifications along the British coast in any other light than as an insurance to be effected upon valuable property, or as money spent by the owner of an estate in draining and subsoil ploughing it. He seemed unable to discern that to spend money in erecting weak and faulty fortifications is very much worse than to spend no money at all. The value of the money wasted is the least important item to be considered. The mischief of such forts as are now being erected upon the No Man and Horse Shoals at Spithead and at Gilkicker Point is, that artillerymen are taught in times of peace to place implicit confidence in works which will crumble in fragments about their ears in times of war. There never yet existed an officer who had much experience in war but was prepared to maintain that it is far more dangerous to place artillerymen, and especially inexperienced artillerymen, behind shields and mantlets which will immediately go to pieces under fire, than it is to bid them fight their guns en barbette, or with open traverses dividing gun from gun. Buoy men up with a false promise of security, and they will no longer quit themselves like men when they find that they have been bubbled. The forts upon which Lords Herbert and Palmerston, and their professional advisers, were swift to lavish premature millions, are, to quote Lord Macaulay's simile, like that

sea-mirage in which the mariner sees false cliffs and imaginary headlands, and which is far more dangerous than midnight darkness itself. The experience of Fort Sumter is pregnant with warning to all who are willing or able to learn. Standing in the throat of Charleston harbour, half-way between Morris and Sullivan Islands, and raising its triple tier of guns and its frowning casemates of brickwork proudly aloft, Fort Sumter was held before the American war to be, like Corinth, "a fortress form'd to Freedom's hands." Identified with the opening scene which heralded the bloodiest strife known within half a century, Fort Sumter, from its blood-stained and dislocated ruins, preaches a lesson more deserving the attention of military engineers than any that its upright walls and unmutated casemates once conveyed. Rent, torn, riven by Federal shot, its barbette guns all dismounted, its embrasures knocked together in battered masses, Fort Sumter appeared "*per damna, per cædes ab ipso Ducere opes animumque ferro.*" Again and again the crenelated heaps of crumbling brickwork, supplemented and knit together with gabions and sandbags, resumed their old attitude of defiance. In spite of tons upon tons of iron poured into the ruin from the Federal mortars, planted only 1,200 yards off on the extremity of Morris Island, for well-nigh four years the young flag of the Confederate States and the palmetto-tree of South Carolina floated insolently from Fort Sumter's twin flagstaffs; nor were they ever lowered before the direct fire of the enemy, or until the successful march of Sherman from Atlanta to Savannah sealed the doom of the rebellion.

The heroic resistance of Fort Sumter, eclipsing, as it does, such famous passages of history as Sale's defence of Jellalabad against the Affghans, or Havelock's obdurate tenure of the Residency at Lucknow, teaches that fortifications suddenly improvised to meet the exigencies of an attack, are like Todleben's earthworks at Sebastopol, of more account than acres of brickwork and masonry elaborately prepared in time of peace. It was not until July, 1863, more than two years after the commencement of the war, that Fort Sumter, weak and vulnerable as its defenders knew it to be, melted away before the fire of the rifled Parrot guns established by the Federals on Morris Island. It was at this moment that General Beauregard's chief engineer, Colonel Harris, remarked to Major Elliot, the officer in command of Fort Sumter, "There is a brigadier-generalship in those shapeless old ruins yet, if you know how to make use of them." In what fashion Major Elliot secured this generalship has already been recorded in history. But we who, being in possession of abundance of heavy guns, and of an unlimited supply of spade-labour, are told that there is no safety for Portsmouth and Plymouth unless defended by towering, permanent castles of brickwork or masonry coated with iron, may be excused if we point to Fort Sumter, more formidable in its ruins than in its integrity,—to

the "scientific sandhills" which for three and three-quarter years successfully defended the mouth of the Cape Fear River and the approach to Wilmington,—to the mounds of earth which for more than two years controlled the Mississippi at Vicksburg, and which for four years defied the whole power of the Federal navy at Drewry's Bluff, and closed the James River and the approach to Richmond against the Monitors of the enemy.

Some of our readers will learn with surprise that out of the seventy-one works commenced in conformity with the recommendation of the Royal Commissioners some seven years ago, not one has as yet received its armament. If it be urged that it is scandalous that, after wasting seven years, and spending seven millions of money, we should be totally unprepared for the enemy; it must be confessed, on the other hand, that the revelations of the last few weeks ought to lead us to congratulate ourselves that no forts have been actually armed or completed. For the late trials, which have weighed in the balance not only the Malta shields, but also, as has been well pointed out by Lord Elcho, the men who are responsible for their construction, clearly establish that the War Office is unequal to the task which it has taken in hand, and that its employes are either unconscious of their incapacity, or determined to reject the assistance of competent advisers, even at the expense of failure.

It appears that towards the close of 1866, and at the commencement of 1867, the idea was conceived that it was desirable to protect the embrasures of forts at Plymouth, Malta, Gibraltar, and Bermuda with iron shields. Contracts were at once entered into for twenty of these devices, and fifteen more were subsequently added,—each of the thirty-five shields being contracted for at the cost of £1,000. These shields are 12 feet long by 8 feet high. The outside plate, or plank of iron, is  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick, 12 feet in length, and 4 feet in breadth. Behind the outer plate is another of the same length and breadth, and 5 inches in thickness. In the rear of all is a skin-plate  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in thickness. It will thus be seen that the total thickness of the shield is 12 inches. The port-hole for the gun is 4 feet 1 inch high by 2 feet 10 inches wide. Below the port-hole there are four girders, called H girders, and three above the port-hole, all riveted to the inner skin-plate. The plates are kept upright by a buttress of plate and angle iron, leaning against their back at either end of the shield, and fastened with screw-bolts, which pass through the front and middle plates and the skin. The aggregate thickness of 12 inches of iron is, as we have shown, attained by fastening three plates together upon what is called the laminated or plank-upon-plank system. Incredible as it may appear, these thirty-five shields, although condemned by every scientific civilian cognizant of the nature of their structure, have all, with the exception of one or two, been shipped off untested to their distant destinations, and,

unless wiser counsels prevail, are to be erected as a challenge to the American fleet at Bermuda, and paraded as the best specimens of military engineering that England can produce before the scrutinising gaze of foreign men-of-war cruising in the Mediterranean.

Fortunately for the credit of England, these shields have not escaped the vigilance of some private members of Parliament, who have, by repeated speeches and questions, attracted to this important question the attention of the House of Commons and of the entire country. Lord Elcho, General Dunne, and Mr. O'Beirne have been conspicuous in their onslaught upon Sir John Pakington, and have shown incontestably that the shields have not only been shipped off without any model target having been made in imitation of them, and subjected to trial, but also that the laminated principle upon which they are constructed was emphatically condemned after trial by the Iron Plate Committee in 1862. "It appears then,"—we are quoting from the Iron Plate Committee's Report,—“that even a shield 15 inches in thickness, if constructed in three layers of 5 inches, could not long resist such a gun as the 300-pounder with large charges of powder; the initial velocity of the shot and the work done being so great that nothing less than  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inch solid iron will resist it. Probably, therefore, plates or planks 8 inches thick are the least that should be used for a coast battery.”

Yielding to an attack which could neither be flanked nor confronted, Sir John Pakington promised to detain one of the shields,—the last left in England, if we mistake not, out of the thirty-five,—and to have it fairly tested. He also promised that a target exactly representing or being a section of the Plymouth Breakwater Fort, now in course of construction, should be set up at Shoeburyness, and subjected to the fire of the largest guns, English and foreign, now in our possession. At the latter end of last October the Malta shield was accordingly tested at Shoeburyness. Contrary to all precedent, sentries forbade the representatives of the press to approach the trial-ground, and none but the military officials concerned in the trial were permitted to be present. Immediately after the firing the battered target was closely veiled by a tarpaulin covering. The piece of ordnance employed was the 9-inch rifled gun, and the trial was inductive,—that is to say, the gun was stationed 70 yards from the target, and fired with a reduced charge, which, by induction, was believed to produce effects equal to those of a full battering charge at 400 yards. Only two shots were fired. The first shot pierced the front plate, bulged out the middle and back plates, breaking the girders and all the bolts in the vicinity. The second shot tore through the structure, breaking away several feet of the back plate, and smashing so many bolts as to make the shield a wreck. When it is remembered that this havoc was wrought in two shots by a gun which is far from being the most formidable weapon at Shoeburyness,

a more fatal exhibition of the faultiness of the shield could not be desired. Fortunately we now know their worth in time to prevent our soldiers from being immolated behind structures which, if stricken by two or three shots, would scatter their bolts, as deadly as a shower of grape-shot, among all who stood behind them.

Within a few days after the opening of the November session of Parliament, General Dunne elicited from Sir John Pakington a confession that the Gibraltar shield had utterly failed to hold its own against the 9-inch rifled gun. In answer to a pertinent series of questions with which he was subsequently plied by Mr. O'Beirne, the War Minister reluctantly promised that all future trials should be open to the press, and to foreign officers who applied for permission to witness them. Nothing, however, could be more patent than the unwillingness with which Sir John Pakington, as the mouthpiece of the department over which he presides, conceded to the public a permission to be present, which, as he well knew, it was not within his power to withhold. The able correspondent of the *Standard*, although excluded from the trial-ground upon October the 25th, inferred what its result would be, and described the shield in its wrecked and battered condition as though his eyes were resting upon it as he wrote. But in another portion of his answer to Mr. O'Beirne, the War Minister condescended to employ some special pleading, which, though in all probability put into his mouth by his professional advisers, can scarcely have imposed upon the credulity of any who listened to him. He contended that if the shields sent to Bermuda, Gibraltar, and Malta were admittedly faulty, they could easily be strengthened by adding another layer to them on the spot. It is not denied that if a solid plate 10 inches in thickness were added to the outside of these shields, they would be likely to resist the impact of the 9-inch rifled gun's projectiles. But is it not equally true that a 10-inch plate would resist a 250 shot with or without one of Colonel Inglis's shields to support it? As well might Sir John Pakington plead, when the Warrior's target is perforated, that it would triumphantly resist the same shot if the Hercules' target were placed in front of it. Nor will it be readily credited by any one who knows the resources which Malta, Gibraltar, and Bermuda boast, that, even if 10-inch plates were sent out from England, it would be possible to attach them to the Inglis shields, as Sir John Pakington would have us believe, "on the spot."

We pass by another palliation of these shields on the ground of their cheapness which has been attempted by the friends of their inventor. Nothing which is worthless can, under any circumstances, be economical. The Minister for War has promised that there shall be no more secrecy as regards the trials; that a section of a fort veritably representing that which is in course of erection at Plymouth shall be submitted to test; and that this whole subject shall be inves-



tigated by a committee,—of which, indeed, the members' names have already unofficially appeared,—specially appointed for this purpose. These promises, so far as they go, are good ; but if the public vigilance as regards the good faith with which they are kept is relaxed, it were better that they had never been made at all. Nor can the day be far distant when it shall be seriously debated in Parliament whether it is not desirable to appoint a permanent mixed and standing committee, whose province it shall be to determine how the money voted is to be laid out in detail, and to prevent contracts being made, until it has been thoroughly ascertained that the materials contracted for are actually wanted.

As the necessity for our having forts at all is fiercely combated by many officers of ability, and as the experience of the American war pronounces loudly in favour of sand and earth-works, it may not be unprofitable to rehearse at this moment the reasons which have guided the commissioners in their expressed determination, which, as is well known, is favourable to the erection of land forts. Inasmuch as our great means of defence will, after all, be our navy, it is of undoubted importance that our ships should be released from the necessity of keeping guard over vital spots upon our own coast, and should be free to act wherever it is advantageous to injure the enemy. If our naval arsenals are altogether unprotected, a great many ships must be detained from active service to guard them. Assuming that it shall be found possible to construct advanced forts in such positions as to keep the enemy more than four miles off from our dockyards, we shall have gained the obvious advantage of setting our fleet at liberty. But nothing is more certain than that each of these forts must be impregnable, for, in the absence of our fleet, they may, each or any of them, have to stand a concentrated fire poured into them by a hostile armada specially prepared for the express object which it takes in hand. A greater disaster than the loss of such a fort as is now being constructed at Plymouth it would be difficult to conceive. In addition to possessing themselves of all that Plymouth, Devonport, and Keyham now contain, the enemy would have a harbour of refuge capable of holding any number of his ships, and would hold in his hands all the network of railroads which traverse the west of England. It will thus be seen what folly we shall be guilty of if we trust such a centre as Plymouth to the protection of any fort which is not able to withstand far greater power of attack than any which could at present be brought against it. Men who idly conceive that they are accomplishing all that is necessary by barely defying the gun of the present day, and take credit to themselves for preferring a weak to a strong shield, because it costs £500 less, are so utterly unable to appreciate the duty which the country demands from them as to stand self-convicted of presumptuous incapacity.

Now the Plymouth Fort stands close behind the breakwater, which

is sunk in water deep enough to be safely approached by the largest ships now sent to sea. Although the fact has been stated without contradiction in the House of Commons, will it be credited by our readers that, in spite of the memorable annihilation of the granite casemates at Shoeburyness in 1865, Sir John Pakington's professional advisers proposed to place Colonel Inglis's shields upon the top of an unprotected granite foundation, 14 feet thick, and standing 16 feet above the water-line? No one is more ready to extol the advantages which we derive from our experiments at Shoeburyness than the War Minister of the day, especially when he calls upon the House of Commons to make liberal grants for their continuance. But of what account are they when, in the teeth of the warnings which Shoeburyness itself utters, a naked granite base is exposed to the action of projectiles which we know will crumble it all to pieces before 100 shots have been fired? And, as we write, the contractors are still busily engaged in constructing this Plymouth Fort, while laughing in their sleeve at the fatuity of its designers all the time that the work grows under their hands.

We have said enough to show that the promised Committee, however composed, has abundant work cut out for it to do. But, in the judgment of all impartial observers, no good will be effected by it unless the determination to make it a mixed body of civilians and military men be carried out. We shall be greatly surprised if it be not made manifest that we have to thank military jealousy and exclusiveness, and the dogged determination of professional military engineers to resent any interference or advice emanating from men not in the service, for the lamentable imbecility which has been displayed, and for the reckless expenditure of many millions of the nation's funds which has been incurred. And here it may not be unprofitable briefly to report what Russia, the craftiest among the nations of Europe, is herself doing. It may be premised that the wily Muscovite, knowing that we Englishmen are the greatest workers in iron that can anywhere be found, takes care, in times of peace, to enlist in his service the best civilian talent that London, Newcastle-on-Tyne, or Glasgow can afford. In 1864 the Russians erected, at Cronstadt, an iron shield consisting of two layers of armour, the one 15 inches and the other 6 inches in thickness. We understand that they have in contemplation another shield consisting, again, of two layers,—the one 15 inches and the other 9 inches in thickness, with an additional skin of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch at the back. All these shields are made and to be made in England. It may well be asked whether it is to be endured that we, who are the most skilful artificers in iron that the world contains, should furnish foreign nations with invulnerable forts, while our own shores, and the strong places in our vast colonial empire, are nominally defended by shields which are admitted by all, except, perhaps, Sir John Pakington and their inventor, to be miserable shams.

We have at this moment more than one firm in England which can roll iron plates 15 inches in thickness. Such plates as these are to coat the exterior of some of our Spithead forts, and, if properly backed, are well calculated to protect the embrasures of such forts as the Royal Commissioners have twice recommended for outworks, and will defy, not only the guns of the present, but also all artillery that is likely to be invented for half a century to come.

We have left ourselves but scanty space to descant upon the remarkable "eccentricities," as they have been indulgently termed by the Times, which mark not only the nascent Plymouth Fort, but also the triple lines of fortifications which bristle around the dockyard and arsenal at Portsmouth, and in the advance works at the east and west ends of the Isle of Wight. It has been proudly boasted that no nation ever embarked in times of peace upon so magnificent a work as is disclosed in the great scheme for the Defence of our Dockyards and Naval Arsenals,—a scheme for which, in the main, we have to thank Lord Palmerston and Colonel Jervois. This system of works, imposing enough in the eyes of those who have never seen war on a large scale, is calculated to inspire more terror in the breast of any experienced Englishman who surveys it than in the breasts of the many foreign critics who have been admitted to a sight of it. There are few more impressive views to be seen anywhere on earth than that which awaits the spectator who takes his stand upon the highest elevation of Portsdown Hill, and gazes down upon the vast panorama of the harbour and city of Portsmouth, upon Spithead and the Solent, upon the Isle of Wight and Southampton Water, which lie delineated upon the mighty map stretched out at his feet. Beneath him lie scores upon scores of acres of land and water, studded with forts of every conceivable colour, shape, and material,—forts of iron, granite, Runcorn stone, Portland stone, concrete, chalk, mud, and sand,—forts which every Englishman who gazes upon them instinctively feels will never fire a gun in anger. Nor can it be denied that nothing is more to be deprecated than that either Southwick, Widley, or Nelson,—the three central forts on Portsdown Hill,—or Brockhurst, Rowner, or Grange,—the three principal works of the second line,—should ever be tested by the rough and unmasking experience of war. No one can gaze into the deep chalk ditches which surround the Portsdown Hill forts without seeing that the scarp walls are already gliding in great slices into the ditch, and without imagining what would be the fate of the whole structure if a rapid and angry fire were sustained from 600-pounder guns standing upon the elevated terre-plein of Forts Widley or Nelson. As to the miserably weak caponnières which flank these deep-cut chalk ditches, it will be sufficient to say that they belong to a system already as obsolete as the 68-pounder smooth-bore guns which these forts were originally intended to carry. But coming next to Forts Brockhurst, Rowner, and

Grange, it should never be forgotten that Sir Roderick Murchison warned our military engineers many years ago that it would be impossible to build forts in the spongy soil which has here been selected for their foundation. Neglecting any precautionary measures, disregarding the condition of the site on which their forts were to be raised, our military engineers set to work to pile earth and brick-work upon the top of a quaking morass,—and with what result it is not difficult to imagine. These forts,—for which, by-the-bye, Colonel Jervois is not responsible,—carry guns which, although too small in calibre to be of serious annoyance to an enemy, would be quite big enough, if fired, to lay Forts Brockhurst and Rowner prostrate upon the ground. We have little heart to enlarge upon other grievous errors which the works around Portsmouth and upon the Mersey exhibit,—errors which no advance in the power of artillery, and no improvements in projectiles, can excuse. The Hilsea lines, for example, which cover the only approach to the island of Portsea by road from the mainland, have been years upon years in course of construction, and have already swallowed up more money than it would be delicate to mention in Mr. Gladstone's presence. These lines, nearly 3,000 yards in length, and mounting embrasures for 90 guns, are, in substance, long curtains of earth with casemated batteries on the flank of each curtain. It has now been discovered that the embrasures have been placed so close together that the guns cannot be worked, and every alternate embrasure will have to be built up. Not that even thus would these embrasures, although reduced from 90 to 45, be rendered available for use in their present condition. The falling earth, intended to cushion the brick-face of the casemates, has choked up the mouths of the embrasures, and, viewed in conjunction with the great fissures which have already rent the casemates, leaves upon the mind of the spectator an appalling impression of waste, folly, and decay.

Let us turn, in conclusion, to the contemplation of one branch of this extensive subject which it is possible for us to survey without dismay. In the competitive examination of guns which we have for years been conducting at Shoeburyness, it may, we think, be claimed without arrogance that our rifled guns equal, if they do not surpass, those of any other nation. The Americans have succeeded wonderfully in their construction of large smooth-bore guns, in which the excellent quality of their cast iron specially contributes to their superiority. One of these huge Rodman guns, 15 inches in calibre, weighing 19½ tons, and carrying a round shot of 450 pounds weight, has been recently purchased by our Government, and by reason of its huge bulk attracts no slight attention at Shoeburyness. The Rodman gun is a cast-iron tube without hoops or strengthening bands of any kind, and is calculated to bear a charge of 60 pounds of powder. It has, however, been repeatedly fired at Shoeburyness with 100 pounds of powder, and at 70 yards it penetrated a target of

8 inches of solid iron ; and in addition to its penetration, it demonstrated its " racking " power by driving a huge piece of the punched plate through in front of it. The initial velocity of its shot was 1,535 feet per second, or at the rate of 18 miles per minute. This gun, however, not being rifled, is like all other smooth-bores subject to a very rapid decline in the initial velocity of its shot, and it is calculated that at 500 yards, even though fired with 100 pounds of powder, it would altogether fail to penetrate the 8-inch armour-plate. The Americans have, as we are informed, constructed a very much larger gun with a 20-inch bore, and designed to carry a spherical shot of more than 1,000 pounds weight. No one can deny that, constructed as it is of the incomparable American cast iron, this is a very formidable weapon, especially if it be true that its projectile has attained an initial velocity of 1,400 feet per second. Other guns 30 inches in bore are in course of manufacture on the other side of the Atlantic, but hitherto the Americans have not succeeded in rifling any of their heavy ordnance, and consequently the power of penetrating iron possessed by their guns is very much restricted. What results they might attain if they applied what is known as the Lancaster system of rifling guns to their heavy smooth-bores it is not for us to say.

The largest gun, on the other hand, which is possessed by us, and which is called a 600-pounder, is rifled. This gun weighs 22 tons, has a bore of 13 inches, and carries a shot of about 490 pounds. Its power far exceeds that of the American Rodman, as it has penetrated a 9-inch armour-plate, while it retains its initial velocity for a distance five or six times greater than that of the American gun. We have not, however, succeeded in making any gun of this size which has stood the discharge of 100 rounds without being injured. We have guns, respectively, of 7-inch, 8-inch, 9-inch, and 10-inch bores, all rifled, and carrying projectiles varying from 100 to 300 pounds in weight ; the last two being of sufficient power to penetrate the 8-inch target. These guns are intended for our first-class ships, and beyond them we do not at present think it safe to go. The superiority of the rifled gun over the smooth-bore consists, not only in the enormously increased power conferred upon it by its long maintenance of its original initial velocity, but also in the fact that its accuracy of flight far surpasses that of the smooth-bore, even over a very moderate distance, and is retained by it until the end.

These few remarks, disjointedly and superficially thrown together, will not have been written wholly without advantage if they awaken in a few readers some thoughtfulness about the magnitude of these questions, which await solution at the hands of a few military engineers, who are, for the most part, men without actual experience of war. Nothing that we have written is designed to bear hardly, or reflect disadvantageously, upon poor Sir John Pakington. Like most of his predecessors, the present Secretary of State for War does but syllable

in the House of Commons the words put into his mouth by others. A more sensitive or a more penetrating man than Sir John Pakington might, indeed, be apt to resent the indignity to which he is subjected when he is made to stultify himself by making such utterances from his place in Parliament as that "the forts on the banks of the Mersey were abandoned in order that the money with which it had been intended to construct them might be expended upon the Spithead forts." During his recent visit to Liverpool, Sir John Pakington probably discovered for what reasons the forts upon the banks of the Mersey were discontinued. It would be no slight gratification to the public to learn that either his own amour propre, or zeal for the public service, had induced our present Minister of War to administer a rap over the knuckles to the officials who mocked him by putting such words into his mouth. But, be this as it may, nothing is more certain than that the only hope of securing for the future a better administration of public funds than has disgraced the past depends upon the sustained and unremitted vigilance of private members in the House of Commons, and of well-informed writers in the public press. Much credit is already due to Lord Elcho, Mr. O'Beirne, and other members of Parliament, and also to the zeal and acuteness with which the *Standard* and the *Army and Navy Gazette* have kept the facts connected with the Malta shields before the public eye. Nothing but advantage can result from an unabated continuation of this discriminating supervision. In the interest of all concerned we can promise that the unquestioning forbearance with which for many years the explanations vouchsafed by Lord Palmerston and the War Department were received by the country will be exchanged henceforth for suspicious and inquisitorial scrutiny, which, and which alone, has been found potential in securing that the honour and safety of England shall be regarded by many of her own servants to be something better than an empty name.

---

## MADAME TALLIEN :

### A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

---

TEREZIA CABARRUS, the subject of the present sketch, was born at Bayonne shortly before the breaking out of the great Revolution in which she came to be so prominent an actor. Her father, a Spanish banker and merchant, owed his social position entirely to his wealth. Terezia may be said to have been born a "beauty," so early is her extraordinary loveliness recorded. Her girlhood was passed between Bayonne and Madrid ; but neither the sunny solitude of the provincial town nor the stately aristocracy of Madrid sufficed to procure this parvenue Venus the homage for which she craved. Paris alone was a shrine worthy of such a divinity, and to Paris she came in order to finish her education. What species of education this might be, judging from her subsequent career, we need not inquire.

The time was one of unexampled freedom, both of manners and of speech. In the early days of the Revolution all the old landmarks suddenly disappeared, and a species of social chaos succeeded. Chastity ceased to be a charm in woman, and honour was no longer indispensable in man. The nation was fast hurrying towards that reckless cynicism which culminated in the worship of the Goddess of Reason, as personified by undraped beauty. Never had France declaimed so loudly about virtue, patriotism, and brotherly love, and never had public faith and private character sunk to so low an ebb. The horrors of the Revolution had not yet commenced, the king still tottered on his throne, and the presence of a dissolute and brilliant aristocracy but ill-concealed the turbulent elements seething under the glittering surface. The beautiful Terezia, early introduced into this dissolute society, but too readily lent herself to its fatal temptations. Her extraordinary beauty, of the purest Spanish type, as well as her remarkable grace, somewhat melodramatic withal, at once marked her as an object of more than admiration to the sated voluptuaries and courtly sinners among whom she lived. Like Herodias she danced deliciously, and like Sappho she sang divinely ; she could also understand the language of love in three different tongues. An aged Don Juan, by name De Fontenay, an aristocrat and a marquis, who, under the mask of extreme gravity and the most polished manners, concealed every vice of his type, was at once attracted by Terezia, and married her. Great fetes at his chateau near Paris inaugurated this mercenary alliance, which was but the first step in her downward career. As the Marquise de Fon-



tenay she was placed on a social pedestal even in that exclusive aristocracy which, in those undeveloped days of liberty, was still considered *de rigueur*. Her beauty now belonged to the Court and the Court circle, and she readily found round her a society as brilliant and attractive as it was hollow and dissolute. Illusions of all kinds were the order of the day, freedom joined with absolute servility to caste, personal vice under the mask of national virtue, loyalty disguising revolutionary intrigues, patriotism in a worn-out and effete society, incapable of a single new emotion or noble sentiment. In this unreal and vile *entourage* reigned supreme the dissipated marquise and her aged proprietor.

But, as of old, they eat, they drank, they married, and were given in marriage, until the flood came and swallowed them up. Thus was this artificial and depraved world engulfed by the first waves of that social deluge, the great Revolution! Our parvenue marquise and her aged spouse at once collapsed, and, as they had been foremost in the ranks of folly and of exclusiveness, were foremost in flight from the inevitable fate awaiting all aristocrats. She had come from the south; to the south they fled for refuge, across the desolate *landes* of the Gironde, where nature, scarce and arid in external features, furnished so rich a harvest of loyal sons destined to sacrifice their lives in a noble endeavour to rescue France from tyranny and bloodshed. Tracked and arrested, the De Fontenays were carried off prisoners to Bordeaux, where the same drama of horrors was being enacted, on a smaller theatre, as at Paris, under the management of the unscrupulous young proconsul, Tallien, sent down from the central clubs to superintend and legalise massacre. Ready-witted, swift-penned, and ambitious, he was one of those unwholesome human funguses generated in the hotbed of the Revolution. He had been ready, up to the time of his appointment as state-butcher at Bordeaux, to join any party, however sanguinary, which for the moment gained the ascendancy. He may not have been naturally as cruel as his compeers, Collot d'Herbois, Marat, or Robespierre,—indeed, his subsequent acts would almost make the accusation of cruelty appear unjust;—but he was cruel enough to sacrifice any amount of lives for the advancement of his personal ambition. Not until the nation was disgusted with the brutalities of Robespierre, and mercy and peace became the fashion, did Tallien cease to be cruel, making mercy serve as a stepping-stone to love and power. His reputation as a prominent member of the Jacobins stood, however, at this time, high. He had mainly contributed to the horrors of the 10th of August. He had been brutally foremost in persecuting the unhappy prisoners of the Temple, denying them the poor comfort of mutual communication, and not only voting for the death of the king, but calling on the Convention to carry out the sentence on that very day, with a noisy vehemence and a reckless unconcern which shocked even his Jacobite brethren.

He had come to Bordeaux, not only to establish there the Revolutionary committees, but also to pursue to the death, among their arid plains and poverty-stricken homes, the unhappy Girondists. Up to this time Tallien had discharged his barbarous mission with every atrocity of which he was capable, and the city guillotine was, by his orders, erected in the great square, opposite the windows of the Prefecture, his residence, enabling him personally to superintend and enjoy the executions. Before this young proconsul appeared Terezia Cabarrus, accused as an enemy of the Convention.

With the name of Tallien opens the second act of Terezia's romantic career. It is indeed to his name, coupled with her beauty, that she owes the celebrity her otherwise commonplace character has acquired. Thrice in Paris she had previously met him: once in the studio of Madame le Brun, the artist; a second time in the garden of Alexander Lameth, when he presented her with a bunch of white roses, symbolical of her merciful influence over him; again, in the Convention, where his loud and daring speech, his dramatic action, and imposing presence, made him, at twenty-four, a central figure. When, with her husband, she was flung into the filthy prison provided for proscribed royalists, where she afterwards declared the rats had gnawed her feet, she little imagined that this darkest night was to be followed by so brilliant a dawn.

It is said that when Tallien was told who had become his prisoner, he was greatly moved, and ordered that she should at once appear before him. Phryne before her judges did not produce a more overwhelming emotion than this lovely Spaniard of twenty before this Brutus of twenty-four. She came, was seen, and conquered. Those were days when all the world was young and giddy,—men, women, ideas, politics, principles. Youth and a desire for novelty, joined to hatred and contempt of the past, were great incentives to the Revolution. Terezia's soft eyes turned with pathetic earnestness on Tallien; her glorious hair, "long as a king's mantle," hung in disorder around her. "You know me," said she. "Yes, citizen; why have you come to Bordeaux?" "Because every one is in prison at Paris." "Of what are you accused, and why are you here with the *ci-devant* Marquis de Fontenay? Are you attempting to emigrate?" "No," replied Terezia; "I am a republican already; we were on our way to Spain to visit my father." "Your trial shall at once take place. If you are innocent——." "Great Heaven!" cried she. "Trial! then we are already condemned. I, the wife of an aristocrat and a marquis, what hope have I?" Her soft hand fell, as if involuntarily, on Tallien's arm. He started and coloured. "You are wrong, citizen; we do not assassinate in the name of the law." He took her hand in his and kissed it. "What can I do for you?" said he. "Set me at liberty; give De Fontenay his liberty." "Oh, as for him, I shall certainly not interfere. I believed you desired to be divorced."

"Perhaps I do; perhaps I am divorced; but, at all events, I would liberate him." She threw herself on her knees before Tallien. "Rise, citizen!" said he, encircling her with his arms as he raised her; "I am playing my head, but, no matter, you are free."

Madame de Fontenay, as we will call her for the last time, announced to the marquis that he might depart, but that she remained at Bordeaux as his hostage. Under the rosy colouring of this encounter on "delicate ground," we are to understand that Tallien plainly offered Terezia the choice of his love or death. His ardent passion may really have found some echo in her own heart. She was disgusted and weary of her vicious old husband, divorce was easy, love begets love, and her life was on the balance. That Tallien was at least sincere, his whole after-life sufficiently proves. Next day the divorce was formally announced and duly legalised.

Without inquiring too curiously into the motives of this sudden change, we must now shift the scene, and behold the *ci-devant* marquis relapsed into the full-blown parvenue, reigning supreme as revolutionary Venus in much-enduring and trembling Bordeaux. Seated by the side of the proconsul, flaunting through the streets in gaudy equipages, assisting at the tribunal, foremost in processions, adored, powerful, beautiful; laying, indeed, the foundation of that notoriety which subsequently gained for her the title of "*Madame Thermidor*," by which she is still known, she ever filled the public eye. What became of her aged husband does not appear, history not considering him worthy of further notice than to record that he was liberated. Perhaps he lived to join in the triumphs of his once-wife, perhaps he fled into Spain; but he appears, at all events, quietly to have accepted his fate, whatever that might have been, and, like an actor whose part terminates early in the drama, he quits the scene to appear no more.

But Madame Tallien, as we must henceforth call her, adapts herself with marvellous versatility to her new position; indeed, her present position was one much more congenial to her nature than the rigid etiquette of the old régime. From the people she had risen, to the people she returned. She sympathised with them, and they with her, admiring and applauding her to the echo. Bordeaux became to her a vast stage on which she daily strutted to gratify her own vanity and the curiosity of the *canaille*. As to Tallien, like the voluptuous Antony, he was but her lieutenant. She was one of those women that nature creates now and then, to whom beauty is absolute power, born to govern those who govern the world, to tyrannise over tyrants. Such are the Cleopatras, the Theodoras of history, and such was our Terezia. She went forth like death, conquering and to conquer.

It is pleasant to record that her reign was one of mercy. The odious guillotine no longer encumbered the neighbourhood of the Prefecture. She would not live there, she said, until it was removed.

When she sat on the tribunal by the side of Tallien, she was blessed as an angel of mercy, the emptying prisons and moderate judgments being recognised as the result of her influence. The male parvenu having found his mate, they acted and re-acted favourably on each other. Her beauty, grace, and natural amiability humanised the amorous Tallien, who was without fixed principles of any sort. Exaggerations of all kinds being the order of the day, her popularity rapidly increased, until it reached a species of fury. When she appeared in a riding-habit, with hat, tricolour, and feathers, and pronounced patriotic orations in the church of the Ricolets, or drove in a golden car about the streets, draped in a white clamyde, lance in hand, the red cap of liberty on her head, she but identified herself with the spirit of the time. So easily do men's minds, especially in France, lend themselves to the sequence of events, however caricatured and unnatural they may become! A change so sudden in the conduct of Tallien could not long escape either the observation or animadversion of the Convention, who by no means appreciated the fascinating influence of Terezia with the same enthusiasm as the Bordelais. Her devotion to Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, was joined to inconvenient heresies on the subject of mercy and pardon, and Robespierre, duly advertised of the measures of the young consul, frowned ominously, and commanded his immediate return to Paris. Madame Tallien followed him—a proof either of her devotion or her vanity. Up to that time her beauty had secured her so triumphant a career that she may have contemplated subjugating Robespierre and all the Jacobins as easily as she had seduced the facile Tallien.

Robespierre desired, in recalling Tallien to Paris, first to discredit, and then to ruin him. St. Just sarcastically alluded to Samson's locks shorn by the fair Dalilah, and declared that Tallien had not only ceased to be a patriot, but was actually an enemy to the holy cause of the republic. Great, therefore, was the chagrin of his enemies when Tallien was at once chosen President of the Convention, and became the leader of a powerful party opposed to the Reign of Terror. Between these two,—Tallien and Robespierre,—life or death hung in the balance—life to France, and the true principles of the Revolution if Tallien prevailed—death, utter, universal bloodshed and death, not only to the nation, but to the cause of liberty, if Robespierre effected his avowed purpose of becoming Dictator.

But underlying all this apparent patriotism, the most potent personal feelings prompted Tallien, who in good truth was what I have already called him,—a modern Antony. Terezia, his beloved, arrested by the express order of Robespierre, lay at that very time in the filthy prison of La Force, having failed in her attempt to fascinate the Convention, before whom she pronounced a florid oration, craving to be allowed to devote herself to poverty and obscurity. Robespierre

still feared to strike openly at Tallien, but wounded him secretly through his love.

From this moment it was a hand to hand struggle between them, and on the life of Terezia hung the destinies of France. These admirable actors ceased to attitudinise, and flung themselves body and soul into the drama. Tallien, maddened by the treachery of Robespierre, appealed to the Convention. "Long," said he, "I have silently borne calumnies and injustice, but the time is come when I will no longer be silent. The name of a woman has been mentioned in this assembly. I cannot understand why she should occupy the attention of the Convention. She has been called the daughter of Cabarrus. I declare in the face of the world, and in the midst of my colleagues, this woman is my wife. I have long known her; and I saved her life at Bordeaux. Her virtues, her misfortunes, endeared her to me. She followed me to Paris in the times of tyranny and of oppression, and she has been sentenced to a prison. An emissary of the tyrant came to her tempting her: 'Confess that you know Tallien to be an enemy to liberty; sign it, and you shall have liberty and a passport.' 'I am but twenty years old,' she replied, 'but I would rather die a hundred times.'" Twice Robespierre is said to have refused Tallien the life of Terezia. Tallien, who still hesitated, uncertain how far he dared to beard the tyrant, had no choice but to proceed. Robespierre, with the inevitable bouquet in his hand, meeting him in the street, laughed at him, and told him to beware of woman. "Is that your last word?" cried Tallien. Robespierre bowed, sniffed his flowers delicately, and passed on.

In the meantime Terezia, attended by jailers and guarded by certain monstrous bloodhounds kept at La Force, who, after smelling each prisoner, prevented any chance of escape, found herself in a blackened cell, furnished with some damp straw and a mattress. Her beauty had failed her. Robespierre was inexorable, Tallien powerless, death inevitable. But she was not alone. Josephine, then Countess of Beauharnais, and the Duchess d'Aiguillon, shared the mattress and the straw. The cell where they lay was noted as the scene of the massacre of the priests by the Septembrionists, and their names, as well as the marks in blood of two sabres which had leant against the damp walls, reminded them of their fate. Poor butterfly Terezia, how did she bear it? She owned subsequently that she grew accustomed to horrors,—she sang and told stories while her companions read or worked at their needle. With their scissors and the teeth of their combs they wrote on the wall—"Oh, Liberty!" "We shall leave soon;" "What is death when we are already in torment?" and added their names—"Citoyenne Tallien," "Josephine de Beauharnais," "D'Aiguillon."

Terezia was allowed, as a special favour, to walk after nightfall in the court of the prison. She knew not to whom she owed this privi-

lege, but she guessed it was to Tallien, and her heart leaped as she imagined him watching over her. Where was he? Would he save her? Did he love her enough to venture his life for her? As she walked up and down, lost in thought, the flickering moon lighting up the walls and the backs of the adjoining houses, a stone fell at her feet. Round the stone was a paper written in printed letters, but under the disguise she recognised the hand of Tallien. "At least, he watches over me," cried she. "I am at hand," said the writing; "every evening, at nine o'clock, you will go into the court; I shall be near you." She looked up to the roofs of the houses, she examined each window, she tried to penetrate every shadow under the pale moonlight; all was dark and still,—not a sound but the beating of her own heart and the baying of the ferocious hounds broke the silence. Eight days running did Tallien,—there, at this hour, when the prison lights were extinguished,—communicate with her. Afterwards she was forbidden to descend into the court. Robespierre's spies had discovered that Tallien rented a granary near at hand, and came there every night to console his imprisoned love. Eternal night seemed closing around her. Day after day the hollow sounds of the tumbrils bearing prisoners to execution echoed through the cells. Tallien was either powerless or had forgotten her. She would not die without telling him that she held him for a coward and a renegade. What was he doing? Did he not know,—he, the head of a powerful party,—that each hour might be her last? She waited until the 7th Thermidor, when the jailer told her she need not make her bed, for that her turn was come for execution. Yet Tallien gave no sign. On the 4th Thermidor Tallien received a dagger. He knew it well. He had often seen it in the hands of Terezia Cabarrus. On the 7th, two days after, the following letter reached him, dated from La Force;—"The superintendent of police has just left. He came to announce that I shall be called to the tribunal—that is to say, the scaffold—to-morrow. This news but little coincides with a dream I had last night. Robespierre was dead, and the prisons open; but, thanks to your incredible cowardice, no one will soon be found in France able to realise this."

The same day Tallien replied to her;—"Be as prudent as I am courageous, but calm yourself." No one could be calm at such a moment; the sword hung over her head. Spite of Terezia's stinging reproach of cowardice, Tallien was boldly heading a conspiracy against Robespierre's life. He knew that his name stood first in that tyrant's list for execution. He waited but an opportune moment openly to attack him in the Convention. True, that in the meantime Terezia might have been ordered to execution; but Tallien acted not alone, and however ready he was to sacrifice his own life for hers, he was powerless without his colleagues.

On the 7th Thermidor, at the moment that Tallien received Terezia's letter, Robespierre passed the entire day alone at the Hermitage in

the depths of the forest of Montmorency. For hours he sat deep in thought, leaning against the paling of the little garden once cultivated by Rousseau, his face paler and more livid than usual. Did he despair or hope? Did that ghastly look indicate remorse or ambition, or was he collecting himself to meet the struggle now inevitable? None can reply—a hypocrite has no confidant. Each of these men declared that he fought only for his country; but Robespierre's patriotism meant absolute power as dictator;—Tallien's was the possession of the fair Terezia.

On the 8th Thermidor, the last of the so-called "days of Terror," Robespierre, dressed in his blue coat, nankeen trousers, lace cravat, and bouquet in hand, went down to the Convention to pronounce the great oration he had long meditated. "Citizens," said he, "I leave to others flattering words. I am come to tell you sterner truths. I come to defend outraged authority and liberty violated. I have been represented as the author of every evil. I have been called a tyrant. And why? Because I have dared to speak the truth. What am I? A slave of liberty,—a living martyr to the republic,—the victim as well as the enemy of crime." From defence he passes rapidly to accusation. He spares no one; he sheds his venom around like a malignant reptile; he prepares hecatombs of victims by his insidious accusations. At length he has finished. There is absolute silence; not a voice, not a hand is raised to applaud him. He is asked to name the traitors to whom he has alluded. He replies with hesitation that he has endeavoured rather to expose abuses than to name individuals. He is interrupted. "You who pretend to the courage of virtue at least have the courage of truth;" and cries of "Name! name!" shake the very walls. A debate too famous among the annals of history to be reported here follows. At last Tallien rises. "The republic is in such danger," says he, "that every true citizen must be affected by it. A member of the government denounces his colleagues. This is an aggravation of evil. I demand that the veil be torn aside." Three times did the entire assembly—all, save the friends of Robespierre—receive these significant words with thundering applause. Cries of "Down with the tyrant!" are heard from all sides. Robespierre, livid with fury, rises from his seat, and vainly endeavours to mount the stairs of the tribune. He hangs on by the rails; he cannot speak; he is overwhelmed.

Again Tallien rises. "I asked that the veil should be torn aside. I see that it is done. The real conspirators are unmasked. I knew that my life was threatened, but I was silent, until, present at the sitting of the Jacobins, I saw the army of this new Cromwell forming around him. I trembled for my country, and I armed myself with a dagger to stab him to the heart if the Convention lacked the courage to impeach him." As he spoke Tallien drew forth Terezia's dagger. She was avenged, and Robespierre had fallen.



Again we find her the parvenue queen of a parvenue society. Her innate vanity and love of notoriety re-asserted themselves, and she parades her beauty and her toilette, and forms her salon as of old. The stage is larger; it is Paris instead of Bordeaux, but all genuine feeling and emotion have died out, and her essentially vulgar and melodramatic nature re-asserts itself. This Goddess of Beauty receives her worshippers at a charming cottage embosomed in greenery and flowers, painted within and without (as a stage cottage ought to be), situated on the banks of the Seine. The young men of that day, called "the golden youths," flocked around her. They were presumptuous beyond the permitted insolence of youth, and extraordinarily ignorant, for the Revolution had forced boys into men, and rendered a regular education impossible. Licentiousness and debauchery succeeded to isolation and terror. No longer in daily fear of death, every evil passion was unchained; they drank, they gambled, they fought duels, and talked in a jargon quite peculiar to themselves. They came in strange attire, these golden youths, contrasting strangely with the mean, and even dirty clothes worn during the Terror, when Robespierre was so singular in his new blue coat and general cleanliness. The Ladies or "Incroyables," but lately emerging from the prison of La Force or the Conciergerie, "strictly after the antique," as designed by David, the painter, draped, not dressed, displayed even more than decency permitted. Madame Tallien, who had called her fellow-prisoners, Madame Beauharnais and the Duchess d'Aiguillon, to her side, led the fashion. Like Venus, she wore golden sandals on her naked feet, and tore her gloves early in the evening in order to appear more like a goddess. They were bewitching, these divinities, very theatrical, very unreal; but the time was out of joint, and they suited it. By-and-by came the beautiful Madame Recamier, and Madame de Staël, and Hoche, and Barras, and Buonaparte,—wonderfully handsome, this young Buonaparte, and strikingly like the bust of young Augustus, divided between the charm of Josephine Beauharnais, whom he soon after married, and Madame Tallien. There were concerts at which republican generals, *ci-devant* members of "the Mountain," and "the Jacobites" familiar with the click of the guillotine, made sweet music along with cherubim, Mehul and Rhode; and there were causeries when Buonaparte, yielding, like Hercules, to beauty, did not spin, but kissed Madame Tallien's hand, and pressing it within his own, told her fortune. Barras also desired to be foremost among her worshippers. They danced too, those three loving friends, Madames Tallien, Beauharnais, and Recamier, Attie dances after the majestic and classical manner, performing evolutions with Greek *chlamydes*, "high and disposedly," to the delight of "the golden youths" and the generals and statesmen, who all regretted even the scanty *chlamydes*, so much were they

otherwise attired "by the grace of God." Some one has called this "the Age of Muslin," and it is well named.

At last, the painted cottage on the banks of the Seine became too small for her adorers, and we find her removed to Paris and receiving a painted fan, "presented by the Directory."

But the reign of frivolity, exaggeration, and ignorance, presided over by our Beauty crowned with cap and bells, could not last for ever. Neither she nor Tallien were gifted with talents equal to the occasion. He gradually lost political power, was excluded from the Directory, and came to be overshadowed by Barras. She, essentially the offspring of a disordered period, a gilded butterfly, possessed no mental gifts to retain the influence with which her beauty and peculiar circumstances alone had invested her. Bitterly did she reproach the once-loved Tallien for allowing the government he had himself established to slip from his grasp; bitterly did Tallien deplore the loss of her social influence, on which he had too entirely reckoned as a preservative of power. The world was growing serious, great wars thundered in the distance, the actions of patriotic generals occupied general attention. By degrees the golden youth became older and wiser, the women, less like actresses, grew at last into ladies. The salons of our poor Beauty were deserted. Madame de Staël robbed her of the litterateurs and the diplomates. Madame Recamier equalled her in beauty, and exceeded her in fashion and virtue. She became *rococco*,—a crime unpardonable in Paris. Before his marriage with Josephine, Buonaparte devoted himself to her, and even is said to have proposed a divorce from Tallien; but whether she repulsed him, or whether he found her too commonplace and frivolous to realise the splendid rôle he already in imagination destined for his consort, he now became as marked in his dislike as he had been in his admiration, and Josephine,—installed in the Tuileries,—was forbidden to receive Madame Tallien, obliging that excellent creature to meet her former benefactress by stealth.

Madame Recamier, a very dragon of virtue, now declined all further relations with the equivocal heroines of the Revolution, especially with Madame Tallien, who was not in her opinion "respectable;" and she boldly sets forth in her memoirs that "she never knew her," spite of *chlamydes* and *Attic dances*. And Tallien? He still loved his Terezia ardently; she was to him the same enchantress as of old; he would have borne loss of power or loss of anything but of her! She, on the contrary, cared for him but as a means, not as an end. Of very equivocal virtue, and incapable of any real attachment whatever, a beautiful mask rather than a true woman, unstable, vain, frivolous, ungrateful, she recklessly flung aside the man who, armed by her dagger, killed the Revolution to save her. She sued for a divorce. Tallien, powerless and forsaken, begged to be allowed to accompany Buonaparte to Egypt as a *savant*. He afterwards was

appointed consul at Alicante, and died poor, blind, and solitary. But if there exist a social Nemesis for domestic crimes, Tallien was amply avenged. Again she sought, a third time, a fresh stage whereon to display her somewhat matured charms. No semblance of love is even suggested in her third marriage with the Prince de Chimay; it was simply a clever speculation. The name of Tallien with its unfortunate possessor had fallen into disgrace; the virtuous ladies of the Directory took occasion to animadvert somewhat freely on certain passages in Terezia's former life; there was an awkward vacuum between the Marquise de Fontenay and Madame Tallien. A link was wanting in the matrimonial chain, very painful to the feelings of these scrupulous dames. In the excitement of the Revolution, when men and women lived on from day to day a fevered existence between prison and the guillotine, these little discrepancies and legal flaws mattered not at all. But now that society had sobered down into conventional forms, and the Reign of Terror was forgotten, people had time to think, and ask each other questions; the answers not being in Madame Tallien's case altogether satisfactory. She was now politically and socially powerless, she could neither cajole nor crush her accusers. When, therefore, Joseph de Caraman, Prince de Chimay, peer of Hainault, and grandee of Spain, offered her his hand, Equality and Fraternity, Democracy and Republicanism, were forgotten, and she emerged again as Princess de Chimay on that social stage she loved so well to fill. Beautiful as she still was, she believed that exalted rank, like charity, covers a multitude of sins, and would force social consideration. She was cruelly deceived. Her third and last appearance in public was an utter failure, and the memory of poor forsaken Tallien was amply avenged. Spite of the magnificence of the Château de Chimay, and the brilliant artistic society assembled to amuse its ever-attractive Chatelaine; spite of the winters in Brussels, and gorgeous display of luxury and wealth, Terezia was unable to appear at Court, where, as the Prince held the post of chamberlain to King William, her absence was the more conspicuous. The frantic efforts she made to obtain admittance, the genuine expression in her letters of humiliation and almost despair, are undeniable proofs of the tortures she suffered, and how effectually they embittered every day and hour of her life. A plaintive sadness creeps over this once triumphant beauty. Accusations and calumnies, strengthened by the royal taboo, accumulate around her; as years advance her former life clings to her like Dejanira's robe, and cannot be torn away. She struggles in vain, the gates of Paradise are closed to her, and after years spent in social diplomacy she is told that the queen still refuses to receive her. Thus was Terezia Cabarrus overtaken by an avenging Nemesis, and died under a punishment most terrible to her as a beauty, most justly deserved as a heartless woman, the ban of social ostracism.

## THE COST OF COAL.

---

PILE up the blazing fire  
Warm to our heart's desire,  
Let those who like inquire  
          How hard the frost is;  
But as the pleasant glow  
Quickens our spirits' flow,  
Surely we ought to know  
          How much the cost is !

Not the cash price per ton ;  
But how the coal is won ;  
What manful work is done  
          By nerve and daring ;  
How much in mortal strain,  
Wearing out heart and brain,  
How much in grief and pain,  
          Tears and despairing !

Think of the miner's toil,  
Fathoms beneath the soil,  
Long hours of weary toil,  
          Working by one light ;  
Patient and strong and brave,  
Oft in that dismal cave,  
Digging himself a grave,  
          Far from the sunlight.

Think what a dreary time !  
Ever he breathes a clime  
Heavy with heat and grime,  
          Through every season ;  
Burrows through fields of coal,  
More as a giant mole,  
Than as with human soul,  
          Guided by reason.

Works, as his lot is cast ;  
Works till some fatal blast  
Spreads, as it rushes past,  
    Fear and amazement.  
Needless his fate to tell,  
Cramped in his narrow cell  
Knowing, alas ! too well,  
    What that quick blaze meant.

Hundreds of workers round  
Know that the cruel sound,  
Echoing under ground,  
    Finds them defenceless ;  
Useless their safety lamp,  
Too late their hurried tramp,  
Caught by the fiery damp,  
    Shattered and senseless.

Vainly they seek the shaft,  
Either by strength or craft  
Swifter the deadly draught  
    Covers the distance.  
Lying, with pallid face,  
Each on the very place  
Where he gave up the race,  
    Run for existence.

Pity those sturdy men,  
Ne'er to see home again,  
Hearty and hopeful when  
    Leaving that morning ;  
Working in endless gloom,  
Meeting an awful doom,  
Sent to an early tomb—  
    Sent without warning.

Not many hours before,  
Each at his cottage door  
Parted from those who bore  
    Names that are dearest ;  
Having no thought nor fear  
That the dark hour was near  
When would be broken here  
    Ties of the nearest :

*The Cost of Coal.*

Never to meet on earth  
Her who gave life its worth,  
Sharing his grief and mirth,  
    Seeking his pleasure ;  
Never again to see  
Children in happy glee,  
Climbing about his knee,  
    Brightening his leisure.

Quickly the news has spread  
Through the town overhead ;  
Not many words are said,  
    All whisper sadly.  
Gallant men, good and brave,  
Hoping, at least, to save  
Some from a living grave,  
    Venture down gladly.

Round that devoted pit  
Groups of mute women sit,  
Loth the sad spot to quit,  
    Hoping, still hoping.  
While the men working there  
Do all that heroes dare,  
Through the dark poisoned air  
    Painfully groping.

Fearful the risks they run  
Ere their sad duty done.  
Gives the dead, one by one,  
    Back to their near ones,  
Watching, with straining eyes,  
As those still figures rise,  
Dreading to recognise  
    One or more dear ones.

Piercing the wail and loud  
Wring from that stricken crowd ;  
Wives with their faces bowed,  
    Sisters, and mothers ;  
Bitter the tears they shed  
Over those quiet dead,  
Winners of daily bread,  
    Husbands and brothers.

Think of their severed lives,  
Scarcely a man survives ;  
Pity their weeping wives,  
    Wives now no longer.  
Dry the lone widow's tear,  
Calm the sad mother's fear,  
Cherish her children dear  
    Till they grow stronger.

Ever on wintry nights,  
As the bright fire and lights—  
Where are more pleasant sights ?—  
    Make the room cheerful,  
Spare one kind pitying thought,  
How the deep mine is wrought,  
With what dark perils fraught,  
    Sudden and fearful.

Then, to sum up the whole,  
Paid as the price of coal,  
Add to the gloomy roll  
    What the life lost is ;  
Think that each miner's fate  
Leaves a home desolate,  
Then you may estimate  
    How much the cost is.

---



## ALPINE CLIMBING.

---

SOME future philosopher may turn aside from more important topics to notice the rise and development of the passion for mountain-climbing. He may pick up, in that humble field of inquiry, illustrations of some principles of wider application. The growth of the passion is accompanied, for example, if it is not caused, by the growth of the modern appreciation of mountain scenery; and few things would be more interesting, in proper time and place, than to investigate the real meaning of that curious phenomenon. Meanwhile we will endeavour to point out another, and a humbler, lesson, upon which our imaginary philosopher may, if he pleases, insist. The history of mountaineering is, to a great extent, the history of the process by which men have gradually conquered the phantoms of their own imagination. We read in our school-days of certain rash barbarians who entered the majestic presence of the senators of Rome. For a long time they were awe-struck by the reverend air and the long white beards of the old men, and remained quiescent, as though petrified by a supernatural terror. At length an accident revealed that the senators were mortal like themselves, the superstitious fears vanished, and the barbarians proceeded, according to their pleasant custom, to massacre the objects of their late reverence.—Which things are an allegory. There is many a venerable political institution that has imposed upon the imaginations of mankind, until some bold man ventured, as Mr. Carlyle says, to take it by the beard, and say. What art thou? Whereupon it has suddenly collapsed. We will not, on the present occasion, pursue our argument into such lofty regions. It will be quite enough to illustrate the doctrine by the particular case of mountaineering exploits, and to leave our readers to invent such applications as they please. If we were writing a complete record we should have to show, in relating the development of mountaineering, how at first men stood appalled at the savage terrors of the Alps; how gradually they came nearer, and found that the mountains were haunted by no terrible phantoms; and how, when the bolder boys had ventured into the haunted house and come back unscathed, there followed a general rush, into its furthest recesses, of a crowd of followers—perhaps gifted with equal courage, but certainly with less to try it. And we should further have to explain that, though the fanciful terrors had proved groundless, there were still some very real dangers to be encountered. At present we must

be content with a few remarks upon the most prominent events in the annals of climbing.

For centuries, as we need hardly say, the human mind was in a state of utter darkness as to the merits of mountaineering. Doubtless a few chamois-hunters and goatherds wandered over the slopes of the hills, and found therein a mysterious pleasure, of which they could give no clear account to themselves or to others. If we turn over the pages of any of the early works which treat of the Alps, we find in them a few scattered notices derived from such peasants and hunters who had evidently a fine natural turn for enlarging upon the wonders of their country to the few who would listen to their tales. It is enough to mention a distinguished traveller at the beginning of the last century, named Scheuchzer, whose state of mind may be inferred from a single statement. He labours to prove that such things as dragons really exist, and the principal ground of his argument is the strong *a priori* probability that, in so savage a country as the Central Alps, there must be dragons. Considering that Scheuchzer lived at Zurich, within sight of some lofty peaks, he must have had a strange terror of a region, at his very door, so savage, in his opinion, that it could not but produce dragons,—dragons being the natural product of its own intrinsic ferocity. Soon after Scheuchzer's travels, the Alpine mania seems to have begun. Pocock and Wyndham discovered Chamouni; and it became the fashion, as Gibbon tells us, towards the end of the century, "to view the glaciers." The great start, however, is due to Saussure, whom all true mountaineers revere as the founder of their craft. The year 1786, in which the summit of Mont Blanc was for the first time reached by his guide Balmat, should be the year one in their calendar; and if it were marked by saints' days, the festivals of Saussure and Balmat would be the chief solemnities of the year. Although Balmat and Saussure thus climbed the highest European mountain, the imaginative prestige of the Alps was still enormous. Balmat must have been a first-rate mountaineer, and possessed of unusual strength and toughness of constitution. Saussure himself performed at least one feat which has scarcely been equalled in its way, when he lived for ten days on the top of the Col du Géant, appearing as a magician to the inhabitants of the valley below. Yet the mode in which Saussure and Balmat set about the ascent of Mont Blanc is to the system of modern travellers what the old warfare, with its marchings and countermarchings, and going into winter quarters, was to the audacious tactics of Napoleon. As an old-fashioned general thought he had made a good campaign when he had advanced a few miles and taken a fortress or two in the course of the summer, so Saussure attacked Mont Blanc in due form, with gradual approaches and operations, extending over years. He threw out reconnaissances, established lodgments in the flanks of the mountain, and at last moved to the

assault with an army of eighteen guides, spending three days in reaching the summit, and returning to Chamouni on the fourth. One assault was repulsed by "the reverberation of the sun from the snow;" after that a party of men having passed all the real difficulties, shrank back from the last and really easy bit of ascent; and it was not till a quarter of a century after Saussure had offered a reward for the discovery of a path to the summit, that the first ascent was actually made. Everything shows, as we have said, that the mountaineers of those days were as good on their legs, as sound in their lungs, and fully as courageous as their modern successors; but they could not overcome their instinctive dread in the presence of the Monarch of Mountains.

Saussure opened what may be called the scientific era of mountain ascents, which lasted sixty or seventy years. During that time, that is, till about 1850, there were indeed many ascents made without any pretence of scientific motives, and probably many with nothing but the pretence. The great mountains of the Bernese Oberland, the Jungfrau, and the Finster-Aarhorn, were climbed, and many ascents were made of Mont Blanc, chiefly, as we may venture to say, "for the fun of the thing." The leaders in discoveries were, however, still the men of science. Towards the end of the period, especially, Professors Agassiz, Desor, and other distinguished Swiss mountaineers, and our countryman, Professor Forbes, did a great deal to open up the districts of eternal snow for less eminent travellers, whilst their principal motive was to investigate the theory of glaciers. During all that time, however, mountain ascents were becoming popular for their own sakes. The view which was generally taken of the amusement may be measured by the respect still felt for Mont Blanc. The hold which that noble summit retained upon the imagination is a kind of barometer of the height reached by the mountaineering art. It was still the fashion to attack him after the mode commemorated by Albert Smith. Each traveller had four guides and four porters; the guides went to mass and took leave of their relatives before the start; guns were fired at critical moments; the whole tourist population turned out to watch the ascent; and a dinner was solemnly eaten and toasts duly drunk after the adventurers had returned to the bosom of their families. To have been up Mont Blanc was a sufficient excuse for publishing a book, and the curious in such matters may study sundry small publications of this kind. They are generally thin pamphlets with fearful illustrations. The party is represented at breakfast on a large block of ice, which is balanced in doubtful equilibrium across a yawning chasm which presumably descends for hundreds of feet into the bowels of the earth; or a bending ladder supports the whole party across a tremendous gulf, into which a single false step—— we need not finish the quotation. In Albert Smith's lectures, the speaker abandoned his jokes and puns,

and became terribly serious as he described the horrors of the final climb, that being a matter much too serious for even a professional wit to touch without, as the reporters say, being "visibly affected." The modern tourist rather apologises for having any feelings at all under similar circumstances, and pokes fun at his readers at the most thrilling passages of his narrative.

But now a new era was approaching. The task of analysing all the causes by which it was produced must be left to the unfortunate being for whom so many endless puzzles are proposed,—the philosophical historian. The sect of muscular Christians was arising; it had not yet developed a dogmatic theory, nor appeared in the pulpit or in novels with a purpose; but its future heroes were beginning to stir themselves, and to leaven the world imperceptibly with some portion of their spirit. Their energy in the mountain districts was perceptible in introducing what we may call the transitional era between the ancient and modern forms of the art. Two or three publications revealed their existence to the outer world. Of these we may specially mention two interesting volumes which both appeared in 1856. One was the "*Wanderings in the High Alps*," by Mr. Wills, and the title of the other was "*Where there's a Will there's a Way; or, An Ascent of Mont Blanc without Guides*," by Messrs. Hudson and Kennedy. These two books revealed to their readers the existence of a new sport, whose devotees exhibited an enthusiasm unaccountable to ordinary mortals. Some hints had already been given by Professor Forbes, whose travels in the Pennine Alps had appeared as early as 1843; but although the true mountaineering spirit is very evident in his descriptions, it was overlaid by scientific disquisitions from which the mountaineering enthusiasm only crops out at intervals. Mr. Wills, however, and still more unmistakably Mr. Hudson and Mr. Kennedy, were open preachers of the new creed. Mr. Wills, whilst giving many admirable descriptions of adventure, might perhaps leave it to be imagined by the careless reader that a love of scenery and a love of science were the principal motives which would justify mountaineering, and that no one ought to climb without a sketch-book or a barometer. His rivals put the matter in a clearer light by their book, and still more by the adventures that it recorded. They had shown that the ambition of getting up hills, the excitement of encountering danger in the Alps, and the interest of skilfully surmounting difficulties, were a sufficient inducement in themselves. Incidentally, perhaps, they might open a path for scientific observers; more certainly they themselves enjoyed, and taught others to enjoy, the scenery of the remote mountain labyrinths; but they, *also* made it distinctly understood,—for the first time quite distinctly understood,—that mountaineering, whatever its other merits, was a sport to be put beside rowing, cricket, and the other time-honoured sports of Englishmen. Both of the gentlemen named were well-known

oarsmen on the Cam, and they carried the energetic spirit cultivated in boat-racing into a different kind of athletic exercise. Whilst they were the esoteric prophets of the new creed, whose followers had not yet organised themselves into a distinct sect, Albert Smith was preaching to the populace. The more energetic devotees looked with a certain contempt upon a man who could not but confess that he had been dragged to the summit in a semi-conscious condition, and who professed his intention of never repeating his rash experiment. The impartial historian must admit that the singular success of his lectures did much to attract popular notice to a pursuit in which he was certainly not a practical performer.

Meanwhile the small band of true zealots had done much towards lowering the terrors of the high summits. They had thoroughly humbled the highest mountain in the Alps. It was their professed intention to break down the old Chamouni system. They endeavoured to prove that the elaborate apparatus of guides and porters was unnecessary, and that Mont Blanc was by no means deserving of the respectful awe with which he had hitherto been treated. To compare small things with great, they did in mountaineering what Xenophon did in the Retreat of the Ten Thousand. He conclusively proved the weakness of the great Eastern monarchy, and prepared the way for his mighty successor, who was to look round and sigh for more worlds to conquer. Just so Messrs. Hudson and Kennedy proved that the mountain power was not what it had been thought to be; but the days were not yet come when the mountaineer should pause for want of a field for victory. These gentlemen and their party had gained their object, but only after long trouble and preparation. They had failed more than once; they had trained themselves by careful experience, and were perhaps as good a set of amateurs as ever attempted an ascent; yet they spent an amount of trouble in climbing one peak which would be sufficient, at the present day, to conquer half the mountains in Switzerland. In one respect, we cannot but remark, they set an example which has not often been followed. They made themselves independent of guides, and gave a much greater proof of skill than many men who have made far more difficult ascents by blindly following experienced natives. An amateur is never equal to a man who has passed his whole life in the mountains; but it would be well if more amateurs qualified themselves, without rashness, to rely upon their own powers in difficult places. On this, however, we shall presently have more to say.

And now new disciples began to gather round the first teachers of the creed. The whole Alps lay before them. In every district there were many summits defying all assault. The guide-books were sown thickly with descriptions of inaccessible peaks. Even in the Oberland, the most hackneyed of all districts, few of the loftier summits had been reached. The chain from the St. Bernard to the Simplon

had scarcely been touched; and such regions as Dauphiné and the Engadine were all but unknown to the tourist genus. There seemed to be an inexhaustible field for enterprise. The zealots of whom we have spoken soon formed themselves into a distinct body; the Alpine Club was founded in 1857, and in 1867 the Alps had been exhausted. The word "inaccessible" had, with certain insignificant exceptions, been deprived of meaning. The first harvest gathered was described to the world in the volume called "*Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers*," published in 1859. The general public first became alive to the importance of the rising sect by the popularity of this volume. It made a decided hit; it was treated with good-humoured ridicule in the *Times*; and the Alpine Club speedily became a byword for a set of harmless lunatics. Like many other sects, they thrived upon chaff, and increased and flourished mightily. The volumes which they have since published, five in all, have indeed failed of the success which attended the first; but they contain an account of the complete conquest and annexation of the whole Alpine district. We cannot recommend their perusal to any one who does not take a special interest in the subject, for it must be admitted that next to accounts of horse-racing and cricket-matches, accounts of Alpine ascents are perhaps the dreariest variety of current literature. At first they had a certain interest even for persons who did not mean to risk their necks; but it is as difficult to secure much variety in narratives of this kind as for a young curate to preach a dozen different sermons on the same text. Certain catchwords about arêtes and snow-slopes and bergschrunds, and staple jokes about eating and drinking and smoking *recur*, till the average stomach is apt to be turned. The general result, however, of the narratives in question may, for our purpose, be easily indicated.

Mont Blanc, as we have seen, had been thoroughly put down. The monarch could no longer boast that he was inaccessible even to unaided amateurs. Little remained to do to complete his subjection, except to go up the wrong way, as people had already been up the right. This duty was conscientiously discharged, but without attracting much attention. It has become as much a matter of course in fine weather to order guides for Mont Blanc as to take a cab for the city; and it is not clear that with ordinary prudence the ascent is much more dangerous than a pedestrian excursion across certain London thoroughfares. We must take another mountain to serve as a measure of the progress of mountaineering. The terrors of the Matterhorn had now become celebrated. The boldest mountaineers looked at its tremendous cliffs with awe, and felt that there at any rate was a task which would prove beyond their powers. It was the one fortress which promised to hold out after every less appalling summit had been reached. The wild range which extends from the Matterhorn to the Weisshorn had the reputation of being the toughest part of the Alps. The Weisshorn and the Dent Blanche,—two of the

noblest peaks in Switzerland,—were climbed by Professor Tyndall and Mr. T. S. Kennedy, but the Matterhorn still seemed so terrible that the boldest guides shrank from the assault. Every one knows the view of that astonishing obelisk as it appears from Zermatt or the Riffel. The extraordinary boldness of the outline produces a perfectly startling effect. One would say that the architecture was too daring for stability. Indeed, we have frequently heard it questioned whether it is not too daring for beauty. The audacity is carried to a point at which there is a suspicion of the grotesque. Some people are half inclined to class the Matterhorn amidst freaks of nature, to compare it with the rocking-stones, or the natural bridges at which ordinary tourists stare, rather than to put it beside such superbly graceful peaks as the Weisshorn or the Jungfrau. We do not agree with this rather hypercritical observation, for the Matterhorn impresses us as perhaps the most sublime object in the Alps; but it is undeniable that its pyramidal mass is carved into such amazing forms as to produce a perfectly unique effect.

Now, the point most to be remarked here is this,—that the effect described is principally due to certain delusions of perspective. It is true, of course, that the Matterhorn is flanked by some of the most terrific of Alpine cliffs. The face, however, which to an inexperienced eye seems almost vertical, is not really steep nor difficult of access. What is more singular is, that even an experienced eye is generally deceived by these appalling slopes. Mr. Ruskin has taken the Matterhorn as a text for expounding, amongst other things, the delusive influence of certain laws of perspective, and has, as it would seem, fallen into some rather curious mistakes himself; but he does not mention, so far as we are aware, the particular fact that the Hörnli arête, as it is called,—that which faces the spectator from Zermatt,—is really, tremendous as it appears, of moderate inclination. It was, indeed, generally thought by the guides that it would be possible to reach a considerable height by following this ridge. One of the most eminent of Swiss guides once stood with us at its foot, and we almost agreed to attempt the ascent of the mountain by following it. Unluckily,—or, it may be, luckily,—we resolved to inspect it from a different point of view, and we found the change of position more effectual than a similar change was found in Balaam's case. The mountain re-asserted its magical prestige, and the cliffs again looked so tremendous that we finally abandoned our intention. Yet the first successful attempt was made along this ridge; and up to a lofty point, where it was necessary to cross a different face of the mountain, it was made without any risk or difficulty.

The Matterhorn thus frightened off all assailants for years simply by putting on a resolute face. It looked so fierce that the boldest refused the attack. All the early attempts were made from the other side, and for a long time the same cause served to protect it even



there, although at first sight there was more promise of success. For several years bold mountaineers with good guides made resolute attempts, and came back convinced that success, if not impossible, was at least highly improbable. Professor Tyndall,—one of the best amateur climbers as well as the leading scientific authority in the Alps,—reached by far the greatest height. With him was Bennen, one of the boldest of guides. They both looked at the final cliff, and declared it to be impracticable, though an Italian guide who was with them appears to have thought otherwise. At any rate, when Mr. Whymper came the next year to try a final assault upon the great peak, this Italian guide had engaged himself to one of his countrymen to make the attempt by Professor Tyndall's route. Mr. Whymper returned straight to Zermatt, attacked the mountain by the terrible Hörnli ridge, found his way to the top without serious difficulty, and was just in time to look down upon the Italians who were at the foot of the last climb. Since that time two routes have been found for surmounting this dreaded cliff on the Italian side. The ascent has been made three times this summer, and on one occasion a girl not twenty years old reached the point from which Professor Tyndall turned back in despair. Truly, the terrors of the Matterhorn have vanished,—at least on the southern side,—and with them the Alps may be said to have finally lost,—with one exception,—their imaginative prestige.

The terrible accident which occurred on the descent of Messrs. Hudson and Whymper's party has indeed added fresh terrors to the route by the Hörnli arête, and it will, perhaps, be long before that route is again taken; but it is more than doubtful whether, if it had not been for the accident, this would not have become a favourite ascent, and one which might, under ordinary circumstances, have been taken with safety. The impression is now so great that guides will not face the one dangerous passage, and they allege plenty of reasons to justify their caution. The rocks, they say, are rotten and full of ice, and in the afternoon would always give dangerous footing. The year 1865 was unusually favourable, because the mountain was almost bare of snow, and the accident was due to a different cause on that occasion; but in most years the passage would always, they say, be one of more than ordinary risk. We venture to doubt, in the face of this, whether the reasons have not been invented to justify the unwillingness to pass an ill-omened spot. This place, almost alone amongst the Alps, is, as it were, marked with a black stone, and defended by a superstitious feeling, which has expired in other places daily traversed, though of equal intrinsic danger; and if two or three successful ascents were made it would probably vanish here also, and the ascent of the Matterhorn from Zermatt become a regular and acknowledged part of the mountaineer's programme. Nevertheless,—in spite of our own reasoning,—we do not advise any one to encounter perils which

are not the less real because they act chiefly upon the imagination of the guides. At best, the Matterhorn should not be assailed by men who cannot place full reliance upon the nerves of all their companions.

The expression of this opinion makes it necessary to say one word more, for it seems to imply a belief that the accident was caused by a want of the precautions which might have rendered it impossible. If the passage in question is not more dangerous than others daily traversed, some one must be to blame for the occurrence of the accident. It is painful to say a word which may be interpreted as condemning brave men who are now dead; and there were not in the Alps a braver and better qualified guide and amateur than Croz and Hudson. They were the strongest and most experienced men in their party, and no two mountaineers could be named superior, if equal, to them. Yet we must add that the cause of the accident seems to us to be perfectly plain, and one which ought to be understood. It was simply that there was an inexperienced and untried man in the party, without,—and this is the important point,—a due force of guides. We do not say who was to blame; but if it was right to take a novice in the art up a mountain supposed to be the most dangerous in the Alps, it was certainly not right to take him with only three guides amongst four gentlemen. If, as is a moderate rule, there had been a guide between every two gentlemen, the accident could hardly have occurred. But we do not wish to insist upon a very painful subject.

The conquest of the Matterhorn substantially concluded one era in mountain-climbing, and it suggests several reflections as to the future of the art. One great inducement for climbing has all but disappeared. No one will again know the pleasure of being the first to plant his foot upon a hitherto untouched summit. The mountaineers may labour to make frivolous distinctions, to claim credit for small variations upon established routes, and to describe how for the first time they have walked up the right side of a glacier instead of the left. But the process is a depressing one, and cannot last long. It is like the effort of a company of shipwrecked men to find a few crumbs strewn about the scene of their former meals. But even this resource will soon be exhausted, and then the pleasure of discovery in the Alps will be reckoned amongst extinct amusements. It is a mere foretaste of what is coming to the world at large. We have the misfortune of being confined to a limited planet, and must take the consequences of our position. When there is a railroad to Timbuctoo, and another through the central regions of Asia, our great-grandchildren will feel on a large scale the same regret for the old days, when the earth contained an apparently inexhaustible expanse of unknown regions, that the Alpine traveller now feels on a very diminutive scale. But when the bloom of romance has departed, travelling will not cease. It will perhaps be more interesting to an

intelligent mind, though the glories of Columbus or of Livingstone will be no longer amongst the possible objects of ambition. It is not quite so clear that this will be the case with mountaineering, or that men will feel the same interest in ascents when they can no longer hope to rival the glories of Saussure, of Forbes, or of the modern race of the Alpine Club.

There has, indeed, been a common cry, which was especially strengthened by the accident on the Matterhorn and two or three catastrophes which occurred about the same time, that under no circumstances was the game worth the candle. And we are quite prepared to admit that if we were to look forward to a yearly repetition of such misfortunes, it would be difficult to defend the practice of climbing, delightful as it may be in the opinion of its true devotees. We believe, however, that the facts show that the danger is by no means such as has sometimes been asserted, and that mountaineering, if pursued in a reasonable spirit, will be found to be not merely a healthy and delightful, but also a very safe, amusement. Thus, we may remark that for a long period previous to the Matterhorn catastrophe, serious accidents had been exceedingly rare. Dr. Hamel's party had come to harm on Mont Blanc from a contempt of the advice of the guides, and three Englishmen had perished on the Col du Geant owing to a total absence of the usual precautions. Still numerous parties had ascended Mont Blanc and other mountains every year without a single misfortune, and, even in later and more adventurous times, experienced mountaineers who obeyed the rules of prudence have enjoyed almost unbroken security. The Alpine Club now numbers over 300 members, and has from the beginning included nearly all the most enthusiastic climbers. Yet, with the exception of the Matterhorn catastrophe, no serious accident has ever happened to one of its members. One or two gentlemen have managed to tumble over their own axes, and a distinguished member, in the ardour of science, succeeded in getting under a falling block of ice, and being considerably damaged for the time; but with these exceptions we believe that the club has remained entirely free from misfortune. There have been almost as many lives of tourists sacrificed on Snowdon as on Mont Blanc since Dr. Hamel's accident, though it must be admitted that the number of ascents of Snowdon has been considerably larger. The explanation seems to be simple. The Alps, as we have said, repelled travellers chiefly by imaginary dangers; they looked so steep, so big, and so slippery, that people feared to attack them,—to say nothing of the fanciful horrors of the "reverberation of the sun's rays" and the rarefaction of the atmosphere to which the earliest race of climbers were subject. As it gradually became apparent that these dangers had been over-estimated, there was a natural tendency to regard all mountain difficulties with contempt. Both travellers and guides, in many instances, lost sight

of the plainest principles of prudence, and were taught by sad experience that there were some very real dangers in the Alps, though those are not always the greatest which are the most conspicuous. In this way, the advice most required by mountaineers is opposite to that which should have been given to their predecessors. They need not be told that many of the apparent dangers are illusory, but should rather be reminded that there are other very serious ones whose presence sometimes is only perceptible to an experienced eye, and that the observance of certain precautions is necessary to justify them in pursuing their favourite sport.

We may hope that the terrible lesson of the Matterhorn has, for some time at least, impressed this necessity upon the minds of most mountaineers, and upon their recognition of it depends both their safety and their pleasure. The first, and one of the most essential, rules applies to the position of the guides. Mountaineering differs from most sports in this, that the difference between the professional and the amateur is unusually great. The players generally beat the gentlemen at cricket, and no amateur oarsman has much chance with a really good waterman; but a contest of gentlemen against guides on the Alps would be far more hopeless than a similar match in either of these games. The great reason is, of course, that most men take to the mountains comparatively late in life. Grown-up men of average powers of walking are perfectly capable of undertaking almost any ascent. There will be a very great difference, indeed, between the pace and the ease with which different men can do their work; a light, active walker will beat a heavy, short-legged rival by many hours in the ascent of a first-rate mountain. Still, with good weather and favourable snow, there is no peak in the Alps beyond the reach of a good average walker, and a man who can do his thirty miles a day on level ground may confidently undertake the most difficult feats that have been hitherto accomplished, unless he has a special antipathy to up-hill progression. So far, then, although guides are as a rule very superior to amateurs, particularly when weight has to be carried, the superiority, though decisive, is not absolutely crushing. Some very good walkers will even equal,—though they cannot surpass,—a really good guide at a steady, uneventful climb. But that in which guides have an unapproachable advantage is a kind of instinct, difficult to describe, which is only given by life-long experience. It is not so much in performing gymnastic feats, though an accomplished chamois-hunter will often succeed in exploits at which the most active Englishman can only stare in astonishment. He will walk and leap upon slippery edges of ice and bare surfaces of steep rock as though he were possessed of a mysterious amulet,—the only magic being that of long practice. There are, however, very few places in which this cat-like power of keeping a footing under difficulties is really essential. It looks brilliant, and

often saves time; but a little patience will generally find a way of circumventing difficulties which cannot be directly encountered. In short, it is a far more important element of success to have a tolerable amount of endurance than to be unusually active; the power of performing feats is scarcely ever indispensable, whereas a capacity for good steady plodding is generally all that is required for the ascent and that is necessary to enjoyment. It is when we come to a higher branch of the art, to a thorough knowledge of mountain craft, that guides show that superiority in skill which makes their aid in many cases indispensable. A good guide, who has probably been trained as a chamois-hunter, who has at least been familiar from his earliest youth with the mysteries of the climbing art, acquires a skill which we can only compare to that which savage tribes display in following a track by the eye. Suppose, for example, that a party with one of the first-rate guides is moving to the ascent of a new mountain. It is often thought, by those who have not tried, that in this case guides and amateurs will be about on a par. Nothing can be further from the truth. There is, perhaps, a difficult glacier to be crossed; and beyond it a long wall of rocks, mixed with ice, to be climbed. The guide will, in the first place, select the most practicable route for climbing the rocks; he may not be able to say whether it will prove practicable or not, for that depends upon minute peculiarities about the rocks and the ice which only reveal themselves on close inspection. But if the amateurs and the guides differ as to the best route of assault, the chances are at least twenty to one in favour of the guide's opinion. The next thing is to lay down the best line for approaching the rocks through the tangled labyrinth of crevasses. Here a good guide will at a glance determine the line to be taken, and will follow it unerringly without a single mistake, whereas a traveller has an equal chance of selecting the worst route, and when he is in the midst of the distorted masses of ice, will probably find that he has lost his clue. On arriving at the rocks, the guide, again, will be able to give a thoroughly trustworthy opinion as to the state of the snow; he will know exactly what is the danger of avalanches or falls of stones, and will adopt the best means for avoiding such dangers. In the actual climb the travellers constantly lose their place, as it were; that is, they confuse the different pinnacles of rock, and fancy that they are at one point which they have marked from below, when they are really a long way off from it. The guide never commits such a blunder, which may frequently cause the failure of an expedition. To mention only one other point out of many; a guide has the most perfect confidence in retracing the exact route by which the ascent has been made, although on the return every feature of the mountain is seen from the reverse side, and has, as every traveller knows, an entirely changed aspect. In a wilderness of blocks of stone, each as like to another as sheep in a flock, he shows a facility like that

of the shepherd with his sheep in recognising each separate block at which he has cast a hasty glance in the morning. There is no part of a mountaineer's craft so difficult to acquire as this; and for want of it travellers are constantly bewildered and hopelessly at a loss, where their guides never hesitate for an instant. Even in a fog or a dark night a guide will find his way by what seems an unaccountable instinct, simply because his mind has become accustomed to mark and retain the most trifling details, which make no individual impression upon an inexperienced mind.

In all these, and in many other respects, a guide has the unapproachable advantage conferred by habits which have become instincts, and it is a real pleasure, when the traveller has become qualified to judge of the skill displayed, to watch a thoroughly good mountaineer finding his way through the various difficulties that obstruct every new ascent. The most obvious moral is that a difficult ascent should never be attempted by a novice without a sufficient force of guides. It will often be of no avail to have even the ablest and most experienced amateur as a substitute; for, in addition to the points of superiority already mentioned, the guide has the professional instinct strongly developed;—that is, he is always ready to give assistance at the very instant it is required; and assistance, to be of any value, should generally be given without the delay even of a fraction of a second. A fall which may easily be arrested at the first moment becomes irresistible at the end of one or two seconds. The amateur forgets to move till the accident has actually begun. A good guide will see the first incipient symptoms of unsteadiness. In the next place, when good guides are taken, it should be a point of honour to listen to their advice. As a rule, such a guide errs on the side of audacity; he takes a natural interest in the success of the expedition; and he is accustomed, in chamois-hunting, to venture into far more dangerous positions than any which travellers will probably encounter. It is far better to give up any ascent whatever than to urge a man in whom you have confidence to go on where his judgment is against going, and if you have not confidence in your man, it is best to come back and get another guide. It is sometimes made an accusation against Alpine climbers that they tempt poor peasants into positions of peril by the offer of a few francs,—to which several answers may be made; as that, if the risk is as small as most travellers believe, the temptation is not unjustifiable; further, that the travellers themselves undoubtedly run a greater risk than their more active companions; moreover, that the guides are perfectly well able to judge for themselves, and exact a sufficient payment for the risk incurred. These answers are quite satisfactory, but only on the assumption that a guide is never unfairly pressed to proceed at critical moments; for then the danger would certainly be increased to an excessive degree, and an unfair advantage would be taken of a man's natural desire to dis-

tinguish himself. In short, it should be laid down as part of the elementary code of a mountaineer's duty, that certain prudential rules should be strictly observed, and that the worst of all breaches of prudence is a determination to proceed in defiance of the opinion of an expert.

There is, however, another corollary to this doctrine, upon which it is perhaps more important to insist at the present moment. We have endeavoured to show that guides have an incontestable superiority over amateurs, and that the most lamentable accident that has hitherto happened was caused by the want of a due force of guides. We may add that it is our profound conviction that an attempt to dispense with their services on a large scale would lead to an immense increase of accidents. Nevertheless, there is another side to the question. It has been too much the fashion of late years for men to trust everything to their guides. Gentlemen come out to Switzerland, and before they know what a crevasse means, they undertake the most difficult expeditions in reliance upon the skill of others. This is fair neither to the guides nor to themselves. It is unfair to the guides, because it is an enormous tax upon their strength. A gentleman was not long ago roped to a guide to cross a glacier, and soon made it manifest that he looked upon the rope as intended for towing purposes. He considered, that is, that the guide was to drag him bodily through several miles of deep snow. He soon learnt better, and showed himself to be a good walker. But his example may be taken as an illustration. Inexperienced travellers become dead weights, though generally after a less literal fashion, and throw the whole responsibility upon their guides, without being able to assist, or even to follow by their own unaided energies. They thus impose a tax upon their guide which is in every respect unjustifiable. Such a traveller is equally unfair to himself. Many cases occur in which it is of importance that each member of a party should be able to answer for his own safety, though he need neither find the way nor give any assistance to his neighbours. On a steep snow slope, for example, a man should have perfect confidence that his own legs are to be relied upon; he should be quite confident that he will not make a slip which, at a critical moment, may endanger a whole party even of able mountaineers, and without that confidence no one should undertake difficult expeditions. Moreover, an inexperienced man misses three-fourths of the pleasure. He has the misery of being lugged over every obstacle, and feeling that he is a useless clog upon his companions, and he entirely fails to appreciate the skill displayed, and to take an intelligent interest in the ascent. He is like a man who should be strapped on the back of a horse to follow a fox-hunt,—a source of danger and annoyance to his friends, and a trouble to himself.

The true principle, then, seems to be obvious. Every aspirant to mountaineering honours should take care to qualify himself by



cautious expeditions on his own account. There is plenty of pleasure to be obtained in the lower mountains. Nothing is more delightful than an ascent of some of the lower peaks in perfect solitude, or with two or three friends. A very little experience will show a man what he can safely undertake. A few walks without guides will teach a great deal that may be entirely overlooked when another man's eyes and legs have to be implicitly trusted. There is an intense pleasure in finding one's own way, and gaining confidence in one's powers. The traveller soon learns to attend to a number of circumstances which are easily missed by those who are dependent upon others. He gains some of the instinct which is so highly developed in the professional guides, though he will never be able to rival them, and, if he undertakes more difficult expeditions according to the ordinary system with a good guide, he will be able to admire with intelligence their splendid exhibitions of activity and mountain craft, and to feel that he is not a burden upon their energies. It is true that there are certain limits to his powers, and he will be able to appreciate them the more clearly. If he finds himself qualified to undertake difficult expeditions,—such as the ascent of Mont Blanc or the Finster-Aarhorn,—he must be content to make more elaborate preparations than he would need with professional assistance,—to wait for perfect weather, to retreat under a smaller stress of difficulty, and to be content with more frequent failures. He must be specially careful to secure a safe retreat, and must not venture upon unusual feats and *tours de force*. But he will be able to judge for himself, and to call in assistance when needed. The really difficult excursions,—for example, the ascents of the Weisshorn or the Matterhorn, or expeditions which require unusual skill upon glaciers, great labour in cutting steps, and familiarity with the state of the snow,—will probably remain forbidden to him without such assistance. When he undertakes them they will be all the pleasanter from the knowledge which he has acquired in his own adventures.

We have insisted the more upon this consideration because it seems to be the great want of this, the last era of mountaineering. The adventitious charm of absolute novelty has gone for ever. But every mountain is new to a man who attacks it for himself, who arranges his own scheme of assault, and carries it out by his own efforts. Amongst the less dangerous mountains there is plenty of room for this, which will always be a charming form of exercise. For,—and this is the last remark we need offer,—there is a pleasure about mountaineering such as few amusements can afford. Those who go with some supplementary object, to collect flowers or to make observations in geology or in glaciers, will find that their favourite pursuit gains additional charms when it leads amongst the magnificent scenery of the Alps. Whatever nonsense has been talked upon the subject, there is nothing grander in nature than the wild scenery of the high moun-



tains, with its strange contrasts and rapidly shifting effects. A man who has passed a few hours even at the Jardin or at the foot of the Matterhorn has learnt what is really meant by natural sublimity. If he has a touch of poetry in his composition, he cannot but be profoundly affected by the strange solitudes of the eternal snow, by the mighty cliffs, and the soaring peaks changing their aspect with every passing cloud that drifts through them and every ray of sunshine that strikes upon them. When wandering amongst their inmost recesses, he bears away indelible impressions such as are hidden from the traveller confined to the valley, and tormented by cockneys and inn-keepers. And, if it is necessary to descend to lower considerations, there is nothing which in moderation has a more potent influence upon the health. To breathe the pure air of the Alps after eleven months in London streets is an escape from a close prison; the lungs expand, the step becomes firm, and the appetite sometimes startles even its owner. Amongst all pleasant memories of such delights, let us try to revive one which many of our readers may have enjoyed. Let us place ourselves in imagination on a sunny steep of the mountains about 4 p.m. on a glorious day in July. Behind our backs towers some mighty pyramid, which, after long calculations and various attempts, we have succeeded in scaling that morning. A cairn, just visible through a telescope from the valley, testifies to all posterity that the summit has at last felt the foot of man. We have descended through various difficulties till at last we have been greeted by the sound of the cow-bells floating up through the thin air. And now we have reached the chalet, emptied a pailful of delicious warm milk at a draught, eaten some gigantic hunks of bread, butter, honey, hard-boiled eggs, and cold fowl, and, after lighting a pipe, lain down on a bush of Alpine roses, to enjoy the pleasure of lazily regarding the glorious scenery and a little village,—not unprovided with a comfortable inn,—at our feet. Such moments leave vivid recollections, and cause those who have once tasted them to vow that they shall not be without successors. We hope that by encouraging the proper mixture of prudence and courage, of self-reliance and due respect to better experience than their own, the members of the Alpine Club may long continue to enjoy one of the purest and most stimulating of athletic pleasures, and encourage new generations to follow their footsteps, though they can no longer hold out a hope of new conquests.

## PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER.

---

### CHAPTER XII.

#### AUTUMNAL PROSPECTS.

THE session went on very calmly after the opening battle which ousted Lord De Terrier and sent Mr. Mildmay back to the Treasury,—so calmly that Phineas Finn was unconsciously disappointed, as lacking that excitement of contest to which he had been introduced in the first days of his parliamentary career. From time to time certain waspish attacks were made by Mr. Daubeny, now on this Secretary of State and now on that; but they were felt by both parties to mean nothing; and as no great measure was brought forward, nothing which would serve by the magnitude of its interests to divide the liberal side of the House into fractions, Mr. Mildmay's Cabinet was allowed to hold its own in comparative peace and quiet. It was now July,—the middle of July,—and the member for Loughshane had not yet addressed the House. How often he had meditated doing so; how he had composed his speeches walking round the Park on his way down to the House; how he got his subjects up,—only to find on hearing them discussed that he really knew little or nothing about them; how he had his arguments and almost his very words taken out of his mouth by some other member; and lastly, how he had actually been deterred from getting upon his legs by a certain tremour of blood round his heart when the moment for rising had come,—of all this he never said a word to any man. Since that last journey to county Mayo, Laurence Fitzgibbon had been his most intimate friend, but he said nothing of all this even to Laurence Fitzgibbon. To his other friend, Lady Laura Standish, he did explain something of his feelings, not absolutely describing to her the extent of hindrance to which his modesty had subjected him, but letting her know that he had his qualms as well as his aspirations. But as Lady Laura always recommended patience, and more than once expressed her opinion that a young member would be better to sit in silence at least for one session, he was not driven to the mortification of feeling that he was incurring her contempt by his bashfulness. As regarded the men among whom he lived, I think he was almost annoyed at finding that no one seemed to expect that he should speak. Barrington Erle, when he had first talked of sending Phineas down to Loughshane, had predicted for him all manner of parliamentary successes, and had expressed the warmest admiration of the manner in which Phineas



"I wish to regard you as a dear friend,—both of my own and of my husband."

b  
a  
l  
r  
l  
i

had discussed this or that subject at the Union. "We have not above one or two men in the House who can do that kind of thing," Barrington Erle had once said. But now no allusions whatever were made to his powers of speech, and Phineas in his modest moments began to be more amazed than ever that he should find himself seated in that chamber.

To the forms and technicalities of parliamentary business he did give close attention, and was unremitting in his attendance. On one or two occasions he ventured to ask a question of the Speaker, and as the words of experience fell into his ears, he would tell himself that he was going through his education,—that he was learning to be a working member, and perhaps to be a statesman. But his regrets with reference to Mr. Low and the dingy chambers in Old Square were very frequent; and had it been possible for him to undo all that he had done, he would often have abandoned to some one else the honour of representing the electors of Loughshane.

But he was supported in all his difficulties by the kindness of his friend, Lady Laura Standish. He was often in the House in Portman Square, and was always received with cordiality,—and, as he thought, almost with affection. She would sit and talk to him, sometimes saying a word about her brother and sometimes about her father, as though there were more between them than the casual intimacy of London acquaintance. And in Portman Square he had been introduced to Miss Effingham, and had found Miss Effingham to be—very nice. Miss Effingham had quite taken to him, and he had danced with her at two or three parties, talking always, as he did so, about Lady Laura Standish.

"I declare, Laura, I think your friend Mr. Finn is in love with you," Violet said to Lady Laura one night.

"I don't think that. He is fond of me, and so am I of him. He is so honest, and so naïve without being awkward! And then he is undoubtedly clever."

"And so uncommonly handsome," said Violet.

"I don't know that that makes much difference," said Lady Laura.

"I think it does if a man looks like a gentleman as well."

"Mr. Finn certainly looks like a gentleman," said Lady Laura.

"And no doubt is one," said Violet. "I wonder whether he has got any money."

"Not a penny, I should say."

"How does such a man manage to live? There are so many men like that, and they are always mysteries to me. I suppose he'll have to marry an heiress."

"Whoever gets him will not have a bad husband," said Lady Laura Standish.

Phineas during the summer had very often met Mr. Kennedy. They sat on the same side of the House, they belonged to the same club,

they dined together more than once in Portman Square, and on one occasion Phineas had accepted an invitation to dinner sent to him by Mr. Kennedy himself. "A slower affair I never saw in my life," he said afterwards to Laurence Fitzgibbon. "Though there were two or three men there who talk everywhere else, they could not talk at his table." "He gave you good wine, I should say," said Fitzgibbon, "and let me tell you that that covers a multitude of sins." In spite, however, of all these opportunities for intimacy, now, nearly at the end of the session, Phineas had hardly spoken a dozen words to Mr. Kennedy, and really knew nothing whatsoever of the man, as one friend,—or even as one acquaintance knows another. Lady Laura had desired him to be on good terms with Mr. Kennedy, and for that reason he had dined with him. Nevertheless he disliked Mr. Kennedy, and felt quite sure that Mr. Kennedy disliked him. He was therefore rather surprised when he received the following note :—

"Albany, Z 3, July 17, 186—.

"MY DEAR MR. FINN,

"I shall have some friends at Loughlinter next month, and should be very glad if you will join us. I will name the 16th August. I don't know whether you shoot, but there are grouse and deer.

"Yours truly,

"ROBERT KENNEDY."

What was he to do? He had already begun to feel rather uncomfortable at the prospect of being separated from all his new friends as soon as the session should be over. Laurence Fitzgibbon had asked him to make another visit to County Mayo, but that he had declined. Lady Laura had said something to him about going abroad with her brother, and since that there had sprung up a sort of intimacy between him and Lord Chiltern; but nothing had been fixed about this foreign trip, and there were pecuniary objections to it which put it almost out of his power. The Christmas holidays he would of course pass with his family at Killaloe, but he hardly liked the idea of hurrying off to Killaloe immediately the session should be over. Everybody around him seemed to be looking forward to pleasant leisure doings in the country. Men talked about grouse, and of the ladies at the houses to which they were going and of the people whom they were to meet. Lady Laura had said nothing of her own movements for the early autumn, and no invitation had come to him to go to the Earl's country house. He had already felt that every one would depart and that he would be left,—and this had made him uncomfortable. What was he to do with the invitation from Mr. Kennedy? He disliked the man, and had told himself half a dozen times that he despised him. Of course he must refuse it. Even for the sake of the scenery,

and the grouse, and the pleasant party, and the feeling that going to Loughlinter in August would be the proper sort of thing to do, he must refuse it! But it occurred to him at last that he would call in Portman Square before he wrote his note.

"Of course you will go," said Lady Laura, in her most decided tone.

"And why?"

"In the first place it is civil in him to ask you, and why should you be uncivil in return?"

"There is nothing uncivil in not accepting a man's invitation," said Phineas.

"We are going," said Lady Laura, "and I can only say that I shall be disappointed if you do not go too. Both Mr. Gresham and Mr. Monk will be there, and I believe they have never stayed together in the same house before. I have no doubt there are a dozen men on your side of the House who would give their eyes to be there. Of course you will go."

Of course he did go. The note accepting Mr. Kennedy's invitation was written at the Reform Club within a quarter of an hour of his leaving Portman Square. He was very careful in writing to be not more familiar or more civil than Mr. Kennedy had been to himself, and then he signed himself "Yours truly, Phineas Finn." But another proposition was made to him, and a most charming proposition, during the few minutes that he remained in Portman Square. "I am so glad," said Lady Laura, "because I can now ask you to run down to us at Saulsby for a couple of days on your way to Loughlinter. Till this was fixed I couldn't ask you to come all the way to Saulsby for two days; and there won't be room for more between our leaving London and starting to Loughlinter." Phineas swore that he would have gone if it had been but for one hour, and if Saulsby had been twice the distance. "Very well; come on the 13th and go on the 15th. You must go on the 15th, unless you choose to stay with the housekeeper. And remember, Mr. Finn, we have got no grouse at Saulsby." Phineas declared that he did not care a straw for grouse.

There was another little occurrence which happened before Phineas left London, and which was not altogether so charming as his prospects at Saulsby and Loughlinter. Early in August, when the session was still incomplete, he dined with Laurence Fitzgibbon at the Reform Club. Laurence had specially invited him to do so, and made very much of him on the occasion. "By George, my dear fellow," Laurence said to him that morning, "nothing has happened to me this session that has given me so much pleasure as your being in the House. Of course there are fellows with whom one is very intimate and of whom one is very fond,—and all that sort of thing. But most of these Englishmen on our side are such

cold fellows ; or else they are like Ratler and Barrington Erle, thinking of nothing but politics. And then as to our own men,—there are so many of them one can hardly trust ! That's the truth of it. Your being in the House has been such a comfort to me ! ” Phineas, who really liked his friend Laurence, expressed himself very warmly in answer to this, and became affectionate, and made sundry protestations of friendship which were perfectly sincere. Their sincerity was tested after dinner, when Fitzgibbon, as they two were seated on a sofa in the corner of the smoking-room, asked Phineas to put his name to the back of a bill for two hundred and fifty pounds at six months' date.

“ But, my dear Laurence,” said Phineas, “ two hundred and fifty pounds is a sum of money utterly beyond my reach.”

“ Exactly, my dear boy, and that's why I've come to you. D'ye think I'd have asked anybody who by any impossibility might have been made to pay anything for me ? ”

“ But what's the use of it then ? ”

“ All the use in the world. It's for me to judge of the use, you know. Why, d'ye think I'd ask it if it wasn't of use ? I'll make it of use, my boy. And take my word, you'll never hear about it again. It's just a forestalling of my salary ; that's all. I wouldn't do it till I saw that we were at least safe for six months to come.” Then Phineas Finn with many misgivings, with much inward hatred of himself for his own weakness, did put his name on the back of the bill which Laurence Fitzgibbon had prepared for his signature.

---

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### SAULSBY WOOD.

“ So you won't come to Moydrum again ? ” said Laurence Fitzgibbon to his friend.

“ Not this autumn, Laurence. Your father would think that I want to live there.”

“ Bedad, it's my father would be glad to see you,—and the oftener the better.”

“ The fact is, my time is filled up.”

“ You're not going to be one of the party at Loughlinter ? ”

“ I believe I am. Kennedy asked me, and people seem to think that everybody is to do what he bids them.”

“ I should think so too. I wish he had asked me. I should have thought it as good as a promise of an under-secretaryship. All the Cabinet are to be there. I don't suppose he ever had an Irishman in his house before. When do you start ? ”

“ Well ;—on the 12th or 13th. I believe I shall go to Saulsby on my way.”



"The devil you will. Upon my word, Phineas, my boy, you're the luckiest fellow I know. This is your first year, and you're asked to the two most difficult houses in England. You have only to look out for an heiress now. There is little Vi Effingham;—she is sure to be at Saulsby. Good-bye, old fellow. Don't you be in the least unhappy about the bill. I'll see to making that all right."

Phineas was rather unhappy about the bill; but there was so much that was pleasant in his cup at the present moment, that he resolved, as far as possible, to ignore the bitter of that one ingredient. He was a little in the dark as to two or three matters respecting these coming visits. He would have liked to have taken a servant with him; but he had no servant, and felt ashamed to hire one for the occasion. And then he was in trouble about a gun, and the paraphernalia of shooting. He was not a bad shot at snipe in the bogs of county Clare, but he had never even seen a gun used in England. However, he bought himself a gun,—with other paraphernalia, and took a license for himself, and then groaned over the expense to which he found that his journey would subject him. And at last he hired a servant for the occasion. He was intensely ashamed of himself when he had done so, hating himself, and telling himself that he was going to the devil headlong. And why had he done it? Not that Lady Laura would like him the better, or that she would care whether he had a servant or not. She probably would know nothing of his servant. But the people about her would know, and he was foolishly anxious that the people about her should think that he was worthy of her.

Then he called on Mr. Low before he started. "I did not like to leave London without seeing you," he said; "but I know you will have nothing pleasant to say to me."

"I shall say nothing unpleasant certainly. I see your name in the divisions, and I feel a sort of envy myself."

"Any fool could go into a lobby," said Phineas.

"To tell you the truth, I have been gratified to see that you have had the patience to abstain from speaking till you had looked about you. It was more than I expected from your hot Irish blood. Going to meet Mr. Gresham and Mr. Monk,—are you? Well, I hope you may meet them in the Cabinet some day. Mind you come and see me when Parliament meets in February."

Mrs. Bunce was delighted when she found that Phineas had hired a servant; but Mr. Bunce predicted nothing but evil from so vain an expense. "Don't tell me; where is it to come from? He ain't no richer because he's in Parliament. There ain't no wages. M.P. and M.T.,—whereby Mr. Bunce, I fear, meant empty,—are pretty much alike when a man hasn't a fortune at his back." "But he's going to stay with all the lords in the Cabinet," said Mrs. Bunce, to whom Phineas, in his pride, had confided perhaps more than was necessary. "Cabinet, indeed," said Bunce; "if he'd stick to cham-

bers, and let alone cabinets, he'd do a deal better. Given up his rooms, has he,—till February? He don't expect we're going to keep them empty for him!"

Phineas found that the house was full at Saulsby, although the sojourn of the visitors would necessarily be so short. There were three or four there on their way on to Loughlinter, like himself,—Mr. Bonteen and Mr. Ratler, with Mr. Palliser, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his wife,—and there was Violet Effingham, who, however, was not going to Loughlinter. "No, indeed," she said to our hero, who on the first evening had the pleasure of taking her in to dinner, "unfortunately I haven't a seat in Parliament, and therefore I am not asked."

"Lady Laura is going."

"Yes;—but Lady Laura has a Cabinet Minister in her keeping. I've only one comfort;—you'll be awfully dull."

"I daresay it would be very much nicer to stay here," said Phineas.

"If you want to know my real mind," said Violet, "I would give one of my little fingers to go. There will be four Cabinet Ministers in the house, and four un-Cabinet Ministers, and half a dozen other members of Parliament, and there will be Lady Glencora Palliser, who is the best fun in the world; and, in point of fact, it's the thing of the year. But I am not asked. You see I belong to the Baldock faction, and we don't sit on your side of the House. Mr. Kennedy thinks that I should tell secrets."

Why on earth had Mr. Kennedy invited him, Phineas Finn, to meet four Cabinet Ministers and Lady Glencora Palliser? He could only have done so at the instance of Lady Laura Standish. It was delightful for Phineas to think that Lady Laura cared for him so deeply; but it was not equally delightful when he remembered how very close must be the alliance between Mr. Kennedy and Lady Laura, when she was thus powerful with him.

At Saulsby Phineas did not see much of his hostess. When they were making their plans for the one entire day of this visit, she said a soft word of apology to him. "I am so busy with all these people, that I hardly know what I am doing. But we shall be able to find a quiet minute or two at Loughlinter,—unless, indeed, you intend to be on the mountains all day. I suppose you have brought a gun like everybody else?"

"Yes;—I have brought a gun. I do shoot; but I am not an inveterate sportsman."

On that one day there was a great riding party made up, and Phineas found himself mounted, after luncheon, with some dozen other equestrians. Among them were Miss Effingham and Lady Glencora, Mr. Ratler and the Earl of Brentford himself. Lady Glencora, whose husband was, as has been said, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and who

was still a young woman, and a very pretty woman, had taken lately very strongly to politics, which she discussed among men and women of both parties with something more than ordinary audacity. "What a nice, happy, lazy time you've had of it since you've been in," said she to the Earl.

"I hope we have been more happy than lazy," said the Earl.

"But you've done nothing. Mr. Palliser has twenty schemes of reform, all mature; but among you you've not let him bring in one of them. The Duke and Mr. Mildmay and you will break his heart among you."

"Poor Mr. Palliser!"

"The truth is, if you don't take care he and Mr. Monk and Mr. Gresham will arise and shake themselves, and turn you all out."

"We must look to ourselves, Lady Glencora."

"Indeed, yes;—or you will be known to all posterity as the faineant government."

"Let me tell you, Lady Glencora, that a faineant government is not the worst government that England can have. It has been the great fault of our politicians that they have all wanted to do something."

"Mr. Mildmay is at any rate innocent of that charge," said Lady Glencora.

They were now riding through a vast wood, and Phineas found himself delightfully established by the side of Violet Effingham. "Mr. Ratler has been explaining to me that he must have nineteen next session. Now, if I were you, Mr. Finn, I would decline to be counted up in that way as one of Mr. Ratler's sheep."

"But what am I to do?"

"Do something on your own hook. You men in Parliament are so much like sheep! If one jumps at a gap, all go after him,—and then you are penned into lobbies, and then you are fed, and then you are fleeced. I wish I were in Parliament. I'd get up in the middle and make such a speech. You all seem to me to be so much afraid of one another that you don't quite dare to speak out. Do you see that cottage there?"

"What a pretty cottage it is!"

"Yes;—is it not? Twelve years ago I took off my shoes and stockings and had them dried in that cottage, and when I got back to the house I was put to bed for having been out all day in the wood."

"Were you wandering about alone?"

"No, I wasn't alone. Oswald Standish was with me. We were children then. Do you know him?"

"Lord Chiltern;—yes, I know him. He and I have been rather friends this year."

"He is very good;—is he not?"

"Good,—in what way?"

"Honest and generous!"

"I know no man who I believe to be more so."

"And he is clever?" asked Miss Effingham.

"Very clever. That is, he talks very well if you will let him talk after his own fashion. You would always fancy that he was going to eat you;—but that is his way."

"And you like him?"

"Very much."

"I am so glad to hear you say so."

"Is he a favourite of yours, Miss Effingham?"

"Not now,—not particularly. I hardly ever see him. But his sister is the best friend I have, and I used to like him so much when he was a boy! I have not seen that cottage since that day, and I remember it as though it were yesterday. Lord Chiltern is quite changed, is he not?"

"Changed,—in what way?"

"They used to say that he was—unsteady you know."

"I think he is changed. But Chiltern is at heart a Bohemian. It is impossible not to see that at once. He hates the decencies of life."

"I suppose he does," said Violet. "He ought to marry. If he were married, that would all be cured;—don't you think so?"

"I cannot fancy him with a wife," said Phineas. "There is a savagery about him which would make him an uncomfortable companion for a woman."

"But he would love his wife?"

"Yes, as he does his horses. And he would treat her well,—as he does his horses. But he expects every horse he has to do anything that any horse can do; and he would expect the same of his wife."

Phineas had no idea how deep an injury he might be doing his friend by this description, nor did it once occur to him that his companion was thinking of herself as the possible wife of this Red Indian. Miss Effingham rode on in silence for some distance, and then she said but one word more about Lord Chiltern. "He was so good to me in that cottage."

On the following day the party at Saulsby was broken up, and there was a regular pilgrimage towards Loughlinter. Phineas resolved upon sleeping a night at Edinburgh on his way, and he found himself joined in the bands of close companionship with Mr. Ratler for the occasion. The evening was by no means thrown away, for he learned much of his trade from Mr. Ratler. And Mr. Ratler was heard to declare afterwards at Loughlinter that Mr. Finn was a pleasant young man.

It soon came to be admitted by all who knew Phineas Finn that he had a peculiar power of making himself agreeable which no one knew how to analyse or define. "I think it is because he listens so

well," said one man. "But the women would not like him for that," said another. "He has studied when to listen and when to talk," said a third. The truth, however, was, that Phineas Finn had made no study in the matter at all. It was simply his nature to be pleasant.

---

CHAPTER XIV.

## LOUGHLINTER.

PHINEAS FINN reached Loughlinter together with Mr. Ratler in a post-chaise from the neighbouring town. Mr. Ratler, who had done this kind of thing very often before, travelled without impediments, but the new servant of our hero's was stuck outside with the driver, and was in the way. "I never bring a man with me," said Mr. Ratler to his young friend. "The servants of the house like it much better, because they get fee'd; you are just as well waited on, and it don't cost half as much." Phineas blushed as he heard all this; but there was the impediment, not to be got rid of for the nonce, and Phineas made the best of his attendant. "It's one of those points," said he, "as to which a man never quite makes up his mind. If you bring a fellow, you wish you hadn't brought him; and if you don't, you wish you had." "I'm a great deal more decided in my ways than that," said Mr. Ratler.

Loughlinter, as they approached it, seemed to Phineas to be a much finer place than Saulsby. And so it was, except that Loughlinter wanted that graceful beauty of age which Saulsby possessed. Loughlinter was all of cut stone, but the stones had been cut only yesterday. It stood on a gentle slope, with a greensward falling from the front entrance down to a mountain lake. And on the other side of the Lough there rose a mighty mountain to the skies, Ben Linter. At the foot of it, and all round to the left, there ran the woods of Linter, stretching for miles through crags and bogs and mountain lands. No better ground for deer than the side of Ben Linter was there in all those highlands. And the Linter, rushing down into the Lough through rocks which, in some places, almost met together above its waters, ran so near to the house that the pleasant noise of its cataracts could be heard from the hall door. Behind the house the expanse of drained park land seemed to be interminable; and then, again, came the mountains. There were Ben Linn and Ben Lody;—and the whole territory belonged to Mr. Kennedy. He was laird of Linn and laird of Linter, as his people used to say. And yet his father had walked into Glasgow as a little boy,—no doubt with the normal half-crown in his breeches' pocket.

"Magnificent;—is it not?" said Phineas to the Treasury Secretary, as they were being driven up to the door.

"Very grand;—but the young trees show the new man. A new man may buy a forest; but he can't get park trees."

Phineas, at the moment, was thinking how far all these things which he saw, the mountains stretching everywhere around him, the castle, the lake, the river, the wealth of it all, and, more than the wealth, the nobility of the beauty, might act as temptations to Lady Laura Standish. If a woman were asked to have the half of all this, would it be possible that she should prefer to take the half of his nothing? He thought it might be possible for a girl who would confess, or seem to confess, that love should be everything. But it could hardly be possible for a woman who looked at the world almost as a man looked at it,—as an oyster to be opened with such weapon as she could find ready to her hand. Lady Laura professed to have a care for all the affairs of the world. She loved politics, and could talk of social science, and had broad ideas about religion, and was devoted to certain educational views. Such a woman would feel that wealth was necessary to her, and would be willing, for the sake of wealth, to put up with a husband without romance. Nay; might it not be that she would prefer a husband without romance? Thus Phineas was arguing to himself as he was driven up to the door of Loughlinter Castle, while Mr. Ratler was eloquent on the beauty of old park trees. "After all, a Scotch forest is a very scrubby sort of thing," said Mr. Ratler.

There was nobody in the house,—at least, they found nobody; and within half an hour Phineas was walking about the grounds by himself. Mr. Ratler had declared himself to be delighted at having an opportunity of writing letters,—and no doubt was writing them by the dozen, all dated from Loughlinter, and all detailing the facts that Mr. Gresham, and Mr. Monk, and Plantagenet Palliser, and Lord Brentford were in the same house with him. Phineas had no letters to write, and therefore rushed down across the broad lawn to the river, of which he heard the noisy tumbling waters. There was something in the air which immediately filled him with high spirits; and, in his desire to investigate the glories of the place, he forgot that he was going to dine with four Cabinet Ministers in a row. He soon reached the stream, and began to make his way up it through the ravine. There was waterfall over waterfall, and there were little bridges here and there which looked to be half natural and half artificial, and a path which required that you should climb, but which was yet a path, and all was so arranged that not a pleasant splashing rush of the waters was lost to the visitor. He went on and on, up the stream, till there was a sharp turn in the ravine, and then, looking upwards, he saw above his head a man and a woman standing together on one of the little half-made wooden bridges. His eyes were sharp, and he saw at a glance that the woman was Lady Laura Standish. He had not recognised the man, but he had very little doubt that it

was Mr. Kennedy. Of course it was Mr. Kennedy, because he would prefer that it should be any other man under the sun. He would have turned back at once if he had thought that he could have done so without being observed; but he felt sure that, standing as they were, they must have observed him. He did not like to join them. He would not intrude himself. So he remained still, and began to throw stones into the river. But he had not thrown above a stone or two when he was called from above. He looked up, and then he perceived that the man who called him was his host. Of course it was Mr. Kennedy. Thereupon he ceased to throw stones, and went up the path, and joined them upon the bridge. Mr. Kennedy stepped forward, and bade him welcome to Loughlinter. His manner was less cold, and he seemed to have more words at command than was usual with him. "You have not been long," he said, "in finding out the most beautiful spot about the place."

"Is it not lovely?" said Lady Laura. "We have not been here an hour yet, and Mr. Kennedy insisted on bringing me here."

"It is wonderfully beautiful," said Phineas.

"It is this very spot where we now stand that made me build the house where it is," said Mr. Kennedy, "and I was only eighteen when I stood here and made up my mind. That is just twenty-five years ago." "So he is forty-three," said Phineas to himself, thinking how glorious it was to be only twenty-five. "And within twelve months," continued Mr. Kennedy, "the foundations were being dug and the stone-cutters were at work."

"What a good-natured man your father must have been," said Lady Laura.

"He had nothing else to do with his money but to pour it over my head, as it were. I don't think he had any other enjoyment of it himself. Will you go a little higher, Lady Laura? We shall get a fine view over to Ben Linn just now." Lady Laura declared that she would go as much higher as he chose to take her, and Phineas was rather in doubt as to what it would become him to do. He would stay where he was, or go down, or make himself to vanish after any most acceptable fashion; but if he were to do so abruptly it would seem as though he were attributing something special to the companionship of the other two. Mr. Kennedy saw his doubt, and asked him to join them. "You may as well come on, Mr. Finn. We don't dine till eight, and it is not much past six yet. The men of business are all writing letters, and the ladies who have been travelling are in bed, I believe."

"Not all of them, Mr. Kennedy," said Lady Laura. Then they went on with their walk very pleasantly, and the lord of all that they surveyed took them from one point of vantage to another, till they both swore that of all spots upon the earth Loughlinter was surely the most lovely. "I do delight in it, I own," said the lord. "When I come up here alone, and feel that in the midst of this little bit of a

crowded island I have all this to myself,—all this with which no other man's wealth can interfere,—I grow proud of my own, till I become thoroughly ashamed of myself. After all, I believe it is better to dwell in cities than in the country,—better, at any rate, for a rich man." Mr. Kennedy had now spoken more words than Phineas had heard to fall from his lips during the whole time that they had been acquainted with each other.

"I believe so too," said Laura, "if one were obliged to choose between the two. For myself, I think that a little of both is good for man and woman."

"There is no doubt about that," said Phineas.

"No doubt as far as enjoyment goes," said Mr. Kennedy.

He took them up out of the ravine on to the side of the mountain, and then down by another path through the woods to the back of the house. As they went he relapsed into his usual silence, and the conversation was kept up between the other two. At a point not very far from the castle,—just so far that one could see by the break of the ground where the castle stood, Kennedy left them. "Mr. Finn will take you back in safety, I am sure," said he, "and, as I am here, I'll go up to the farm for a moment. If I don't show myself now and again when I am here, they think I'm indifferent about the 'bestials.'"

"Now, Mr. Kennedy," said Lady Laura, "you are going to pretend to understand all about sheep and oxen." Mr. Kennedy, owning that it was so, went away to his farm, and Phineas with Lady Laura returned towards the house. "I think, upon the whole," said Lady Laura, "that that is as good a man as I know."

"I should think he is an idle one," said Phineas.

"I doubt that. He is, perhaps, neither zealous nor active. But he is thoughtful and high-principled, and has a method and a purpose in the use which he makes of his money. And you see that he has poetry in his nature too, if you get him upon the right string. How fond he is of the scenery of this place!"

"Any man would be fond of that. I'm ashamed to say that it almost makes me envy him. I certainly never have wished to be Mr. Robert Kennedy in London, but I should like to be the Laird of Loughlinter."

"'Laird of Linn and Laird of Linter,—Here in summer, gone in winter.' There is some ballad about the old lairds; but that belongs to a time when Mr. Kennedy had not been heard of, when some branch of the Mackenzies lived down at that wretched old tower which you see as you first come upon the lake. When old Mr. Kennedy bought it there were hardly a hundred acres on the property under cultivation."

"And it belonged to the Mackenzies."

"Yes;—to the Mackenzie of Linn, as he was called. It was Mr. Kennedy, the old man, who was first called Loughlinter. That is



Linn Castle, and they lived there for hundreds of years. But these Highlanders, with all that is said of their family pride, have forgotten the Mackenzies already, and are quite proud of their rich landlord."

"That is unpoetical," said Phineas.

"Yes;—but then poetry is so usually false. I doubt whether Scotland would not have been as prosaic a country as any under the sun but for Walter Scott;—and I have no doubt that Henry V. owes the romance of his character altogether to Shakspeare."

"I sometimes think you despise poetry," said Phineas.

"When it is false I do. The difficulty is to know when it is false and when it is true. Tom Moore was always false."

"Not so false as Byron," said Phineas with energy.

"Much more so, my friend. But we will not discuss that now. Have you seen Mr. Monk since you have been here?"

"I have seen no one. I came with Mr. Ratler."

"Why with Mr. Ratler? You cannot find Mr. Ratler a companion much to your taste."

"Chance brought us together. But Mr. Ratler is a man of sense, Lady Laura, and is not to be despised."

"It always seems to me," said Lady Laura, "that nothing is to be gained in politics by sitting at the feet of the little Gamaliels."

"But the great Gamaliels will not have a novice on their foot-stools."

"Then sit at no man's feet. Is it not astonishing that the price generally put upon any article by the world is that which the owner puts on it?—and that this is specially true of a man's own self? If you herd with Ratler, men will take it for granted that you are a Ratlerite, and no more. If you consort with Greshams and Pallisers, you will equally be supposed to know your own place."

"I never knew a Mentor," said Phineas, "so apt as you are to fill his Telemachus with pride."

"It is because I do not think your fault lies that way. If it did, or if I thought so, my Telemachus, you may be sure that I should resign my position as Mentor. Here are Mr. Kennedy and Lady Glencora and Mrs. Gresham on the steps." Then they went up through the Ionic columns on to the broad stone terrace before the door, and there they found a crowd of men and women. For the legislators and statesmen had written their letters, and the ladies had taken their necessary rest.

Phineas, as he was dressing, considered deeply all that Lady Laura had said to him,—not so much with reference to the advice which she had given him, though that also was of importance, as to the fact that it had been given by her. She had first called herself his Mentor; but he had accepted the name and had addressed her as her Telemachus. And yet he believed himself to be older than she,—if, indeed, there was any difference in their ages. And was it possible that a female

Mentor should love her Telemachus,—should love him as Phineas desired to be loved by Lady Laura? He would not say that it was impossible. Perhaps there had been mistakes between them;—a mistake in his manner of addressing her, and another in hers of addressing him. Perhaps the old bachelor of forty-three was not thinking of a wife. Had this old bachelor of forty-three been really in love with Lady Laura, would he have allowed her to walk home alone with Phineas, leaving her with some flimsy pretext of having to look at his sheep? Phineas resolved that he must at any rate play out his game,—whether he were to lose it or to win it; and in playing it he must, if possible, drop something of that Mentor and Telemachus style of conversation. As to the advice given him of herding with Greshams and Pallisers, instead of with Ratlers and Fitzgibbons,—he must use that as circumstances might direct. To him, himself, as he thought of it all, it was sufficiently astonishing that even the Ratlers and Fitzgibbons should admit him among them as one of themselves. “When I think of my father and of the old house at Killaloe, and remember that hitherto I have done nothing myself, I cannot understand how it is that I should be at Loughlinter.” There was only one way of understanding it. If Lady Laura really loved him, the riddle might be read.

The rooms at Loughlinter were splendid, much larger and very much more richly furnished than those at Saulsby. But there was a certain stiffness in the movement of things, and perhaps in the manner of some of those present, which was not felt at Saulsby. Phineas at once missed the grace and prettiness and cheery audacity of Violet Effingham, and felt at the same time that Violet Effingham would be out of her element at Loughlinter. At Loughlinter they were met for business. It was at least a semi-political, or perhaps rather a semi-official gathering, and he became aware that he ought not to look simply for amusement. When he entered the drawing-room before dinner, Mr. Monk and Mr. Palliser, and Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Gresham, with sundry others, were standing in a wide group before the fireplace, and among them were Lady Glencora Palliser and Lady Laura and Mrs. Bonteen. As he approached them it seemed as though a sort of opening was made for himself; but he could see, though others did not, that the movement came from Lady Laura.

“I believe, Mr. Monk,” said Lady Glencora, “that you and I are the only two in the whole party who really know what we would be at.”

“If I must be divided from so many of my friends,” said Mr. Monk, “I am happy to go astray in the company of Lady Glencora Palliser.”

“And might I ask,” said Mr. Gresham, with a peculiar smile for which he was famous, “what it is that you and Mr. Monk are really at.”

"Making men and women all equal," said Lady Glencora. "That I take to be the gist of our political theory."

"Lady Glencora, I must cry off," said Mr. Monk.

"Yes;—no doubt. If I were in the Cabinet myself I should not admit so much. There are reticences,—of course. And there is an official discretion."

"But you don't mean to say, Lady Glencora, that you would really advocate equality?" said Mrs. Bonteen.

"I do mean to say so, Mrs. Bonteen. And I mean to go further, and to tell you that you are no Liberal at heart unless you do so likewise;—unless that is the basis of your political aspirations."

"Pray let me speak for myself, Lady Glencora."

"By no means,—not when you are criticising me and my politics. Do you not wish to make the lower orders comfortable?"

"Certainly," said Mrs. Bonteen.

"And educated, and happy, and good?"

"Undoubtedly."

"To make them as comfortable and as good as yourself?"

"Better if possible."

"And I'm sure you wish to make yourself as good and as comfortable as anybody else,—as those above you, if anybody is above you? You will admit that?"

"Yes;—if I understand you."

"Then you have admitted everything, and are an advocate for general equality,—just as Mr. Monk is, and as I am. There is no getting out of it;—is there, Mr. Kennedy?" Then dinner was announced, and Mr. Kennedy walked off with the French Republican on his arm. As she went, she whispered into Mr. Kennedy's ear, "You will understand me. I am not saying that people are equal; but that the tendency of all law-making and of all governing should be to reduce the inequalities." In answer to which Mr. Kennedy said not a word. Lady Glencora's politics were too fast and furious for his nature.

A week passed by at Loughlinter, at the end of which Phineas found himself on terms of friendly intercourse with all the political magnates assembled in the house, but especially with Mr. Monk. He had determined that he would not follow Lady Laura's advice as to his selection of companions, if in doing so he should be driven even to a seeming of intrusion. He made no attempt to sit at the feet of anybody, and would stand aloof when bigger men than himself were talking, and was content to be less,—as indeed he was less,—than Mr. Bonteen or Mr. Ratler. But at the end of a week he found that, without any effort on his part,—almost in opposition to efforts on his part,—he had fallen into an easy pleasant way with these men which was very delightful to him. He had killed a stag in company with Mr. Palliser, and had stopped beneath a crag to discuss with him a question as to

the duty on Irish malt. He had played chess with Mr. Gresham, and had been told that gentleman's opinion on the trial of Mr. Jefferson Davis. Lord Brentford had—at last—called him Finn, and had proved to him that nothing was known in Ireland about sheep. But with Mr. Monk he had had long discussions on abstract questions in politics,—and before the week was over was almost disposed to call himself a disciple, or, at least, a follower of Mr. Monk. Why not of Mr. Monk as well as of any one else? Mr. Monk was in the Cabinet, and of all the members of the Cabinet was the most advanced Liberal. “Lady Glencora was not so far wrong the other night,” Mr. Monk said to him. “Equality is an ugly word and shouldn't be used. It misleads, and frightens, and is a bugbear. And she, in using it, had not perhaps a clearly defined meaning for it in her own mind. But the wish of every honest man should be to assist in lifting up those below him, till they be something nearer his own level than he finds them.” To this Phineas assented,—and by degrees he found himself assenting to a great many things that Mr. Monk said to him.

Mr. Monk was a thin, tall, gaunt man, who had devoted his whole life to politics, hitherto without any personal reward beyond that which came to him from the reputation of his name, and from the honour of a seat in Parliament. He was one of four or five brothers,—and all besides him were in trade. They had prospered in trade, whereas he had prospered solely in politics; and men said that he was dependent altogether on what his relatives supplied for his support. He had now been in Parliament for more than twenty years, and had been known not only as a Radical but as a Democrat. Ten years since, when he had risen to fame, but not to repute, among the men who then governed England, nobody dreamed that Joshua Monk would ever be a paid servant of the Crown. He had inveighed against one minister after another as though they all deserved impeachment. He had advocated political doctrines which at that time seemed to be altogether at variance with any possibility of governing according to English rules of government. He had been regarded as a pestilent thorn in the sides of all ministers. But now he was a member of the Cabinet, and those whom he had terrified in the old days began to find that he was not so much unlike other men. There are but few horses whom you cannot put into harness, and those of the highest spirit will generally do your work the best.

Phineas, who had his eyes about him, thought that he could perceive that Mr. Palliser did not shoot a deer with Mr. Ratler, and that Mr. Gresham played no chess with Mr. Bonteen. Bonteen, indeed, was a noisy pushing man whom nobody seemed to like, and Phineas wondered why he should be at Loughlinter,—and why he should be in office. His friend Laurence Fitzgibbon had indeed once endeavoured to explain this. “A man who can vote hard, as I call it; and

who will speak a few words now and then as they're wanted, without any ambition that way, may always have his price. And if he has a pretty wife into the bargain, he ought to have a pleasant time of it." Mr. Ratler no doubt was a very useful man, who thoroughly knew his business; but yet, as it seemed to Phineas, no very great distinction was shown to Mr. Ratler at Loughlinter. "If I got as high as that," he said to himself, "I should think myself a miracle of luck. And yet nobody seems to think anything of Ratler. It is all nothing unless one can go to the very top."

"I believe I did right to accept office," Mr. Monk said to him one day, as they sat together on a rock close by one of the little bridges over the Linter. "Indeed, unless a man does so when the bonds of the office tendered to him are made compatible with his own views, he declines to proceed on the open path towards the prosecution of those views. A man who is combating one ministry after another, and striving to imbue those ministers with his convictions, can hardly decline to become a minister himself when he finds that those convictions of his own are henceforth,—or at least for some time to come,—to be the ministerial convictions of the day. Do you follow me?"

"Very clearly," said Phineas. "You would have denied your own children had you refused."

"Unless indeed a man were to feel that he was in some way unfitted for office work. I very nearly provided for myself an escape on that plea;—but when I came to sift it, I thought that it would be false. But let me tell you that the delight of political life is altogether in opposition. Why, it is freedom against slavery, fire against clay, movement against stagnation! The very inaccuracy which is permitted to opposition is in itself a charm worth more than all the patronage and all the prestige of ministerial power. You'll try them both, and then say if you do not agree with me. Give me the full swing of the benches below the gangway, where I needed to care for no one, and could always enjoy myself on my legs as long as I felt that I was true to those who sent me there! That is all over now. They have got me into harness, and my shoulders are sore. The oats, however, are of the best, and the hay is unexceptionable."

---

#### CHAPTER XV.

##### DONALD BEAN'S PONY.

PHINEAS liked being told that the pleasures of opposition and the pleasures of office were both open to him,—and he liked also to be the chosen receptacle of Mr. Monk's confidence. He had come to understand that he was expected to remain ten days at Loughlinter, and

that then there was to be a general movement. Since the first day he had seen but little of Mr. Kennedy, but he had found himself very frequently with Lady Laura. And then had come up the question of his projected trip to Paris with Lord Chiltern. He had received a letter from Lord Chiltern.

"DEAR FINN,

"Are you going to Paris with me?

"Yours, C."

There had been not a word beyond this, and before he answered it he made up his mind to tell Lady Laura the truth. He could not go to Paris because he had no money.

"I've just got that from your brother," said he.

"How like Oswald. He writes to me perhaps three times in the year, and his letters are just the same. You will go I hope?"

"Well;—no."

"I am sorry for that."

"I wonder whether I may tell you the real reason, Lady Laura."

"Nay;—I cannot answer that; but unless it be some political secret between you and Mr. Monk, I should think you might."

"I cannot afford to go to Paris this autumn. It seems to be a shocking admission to make,—though I don't know why it should be."

"Nor I;—but, Mr. Finn, I like you all the better for making it. I am very sorry, for Oswald's sake. It's so hard to find any companion for him whom he would like and whom we,—that is I,—should think altogether——; you know what I mean, Mr. Finn."

"Your wish that I should go with him is a great compliment, and I thoroughly wish that I could do it. As it is, I must go to Killaloe and retrieve my finances. I daresay, Lady Laura, you can hardly conceive how very poor a man I am." There was a melancholy tone about his voice as he said this, which made her think for the moment whether or no he had been right in going into Parliament, and whether she had been right in instigating him to do so. But it was too late to recur to that question now.

"You must climb into office early, and forego those pleasures of opposition which are so dear to Mr. Monk," she said, smiling. "After all, money is an accident which does not count nearly so high as do some other things. You and Mr. Kennedy have the same enjoyment of everything around you here."

"Yes; while it lasts."

"And Lady Glencora and I stand pretty much on the same footing, in spite of all her wealth,—except that she is a married woman. I do not know what she is worth,—something not to be counted; and I am worth—just what papa chooses to give me. A ten-pound

note at the present moment I should look upon as great riches." This was the first time she had ever spoken to him of her own position as regards money; but he had heard, or thought that he had heard, that she had been left a fortune altogether independent of her father.

The last of the ten days had now come, and Phineas was discontented and almost unhappy. The more he saw of Lady Laura the more he feared that it was impossible that she should become his wife. And yet from day to day his intimacy with her became more close. He had never made love to her, nor could he discover that it was possible for him to do so. She seemed to be a woman for whom all the ordinary stages of love-making were quite unsuitable. Of course he could declare his love and ask her to be his wife on any occasion on which he might find himself to be alone with her. And on this morning he made up his mind that he would do so before the day was over. It might be possible that she would never speak to him again;—that all the pleasures and ambitious hopes to which she had introduced him might be over as soon as that rash word should have been spoken! But, nevertheless, he would speak it.

On this day there was to be a grouse-shooting party, and the shooters were to be out early. It had been talked of for some day or two past, and Phineas knew that he could not escape it. There had been some rivalry between him and Mr. Bonteen, and there was to be a sort of match as to which of the two would kill most birds before lunch. But there had also been some half promise on Lady Laura's part that she would walk with him up the Linter and come down upon the lake, taking an opposite direction from that by which they had returned with Mr. Kennedy.

"But you will be shooting all day," she said, when he proposed it to her as they were starting for the moor. The waggonet that was to take them was at the door, and she was there to see them start. Her father was one of the shooting party, and Mr. Kennedy was another.

"I will undertake to be back in time, if you will not think it too hot. I shall not see you again till we meet in town next year."

"Then I certainly will go with you,—that is to say, if you are here. But you cannot return without the rest of the party, as you are going so far."

"I'll get back somehow," said Phineas, who was resolved that a few miles more or less of mountain should not detain him from the prosecution of a task so vitally important to him. "If we start at five that will be early enough."

"Quite early enough," said Lady Laura.

Phineas went off to the mountains, and shot his grouse, and won his match, and eat his luncheon. Mr. Bonteen, however, was not beaten by much, and was in consequence somewhat ill-humoured.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Mr. Bonteen, "I'll back myself for the rest of the day for a ten-pound note."

Now there had been no money staked on the match at all,—but it had been simply a trial of skill, as to which would kill the most birds in a given time. And the proposition for that trial had come from Mr. Bonteen himself. "I should not think of shooting for money," said Phineas.

"And why not? A bet is the only way to decide these things."

"Partly because I'm sure I shouldn't hit a bird," said Phineas, "and partly because I haven't got any money to lose."

"I hate bets," said Mr. Kennedy to him afterwards. "I was annoyed when Bonteen offered the wager. I felt sure, however, you would not accept it."

"I suppose such bets are very common."

"I don't think men ought to propose them unless they are quite sure of their company. Maybe I'm wrong, and I often feel that I am strait-laced about such things. It is so odd to me that men cannot amuse themselves without pitting themselves against each other. When a man tells me that he can shoot better than I, I tell him that my keeper can shoot better than he."

"All the same, it's a good thing to excel," said Phineas.

"I'm not so sure of that," said Mr. Kennedy. "A man who can kill more salmon than anybody else, can rarely do anything else. Are you going on with your match?"

"No; I'm going to make my way back to Loughlinter."

"Not alone?"

"Yes, alone."

"It's over nine miles. You can't walk it."

Phineas looked at his watch, and found that it was now two o'clock. It was a broiling day in August, and the way back to Loughlinter, for six or seven out of the nine miles, would be along a high road. "I must do it all the same," said he, preparing for a start. "I have an engagement with Lady Laura Standish; and as this is the last day that I shall see her, I certainly do not mean to break it."

"An engagement with Lady Laura," said Mr. Kennedy. "Why did you not tell me, that I might have a pony ready? But come along. Donald Bean has a pony. He's not much bigger than a dog, but he'll carry you to Loughlinter."

"I can walk it, Mr. Kennedy."

"Yes; and think of the state in which you'd reach Loughlinter! Come along with me."

"But I can't take you off the mountain," said Phineas.

"Then you must allow me to take you off."

So Mr. Kennedy led the way down to Donald Bean's cottage, and before three o'clock Phineas found himself mounted on a shaggy steed, which, in sober truth, was not much bigger than a large dog. "If



Mr. Kennedy is really my rival," said Phineas to himself, as he trotted along, "I almost think that I am doing an unhandsome thing in taking the pony."

At five o'clock he was under the portico before the front door, and there he found Lady Laura waiting for him,—waiting for him, or at least ready for him. She had on her hat and gloves and light shawl, and her parasol was in her hand. He thought that he had never seen her look so young, so pretty, and so fit to receive a lover's vows. But at the same moment it occurred to him that she was Lady Laura Standish, the daughter of an Earl, the descendant of a line of Earls,—and that he was the son of a simple country doctor in Ireland. Was it fitting that he should ask such a woman to be his wife? But then Mr. Kennedy was the son of a man who had walked into Glasgow with half-a-crown in his pocket. Mr. Kennedy's grandfather had been,—Phineas thought that he had heard that Mr. Kennedy's grandfather had been a Scotch drover; whereas his own grandfather had been a little squire near Ennistimon, in County Clare, and his own first cousin once removed still held the paternal acres at Finn Grove. His family was supposed to be descended from kings in that part of Ireland. It certainly did not become him to fear Lady Laura on the score of rank, if it was to be allowed to Mr. Kennedy to proceed without fear on that head. As to wealth, Lady Laura had already told him that her fortune was no greater than his. Her statement to himself on that head made him feel that he should not hesitate on the score of money. They neither had any, and he was willing to work for both. If she feared the risk, let her say so.

It was thus that he argued with himself; but yet he knew,—knew as well as the reader will know,—that he was going to do that which he had no right to do. It might be very well for him to wait,—presuming him to be successful in his love,—for the opening of that oyster with his political sword, that oyster on which he proposed that they should both live; but such waiting could not well be to the taste of Lady Laura Standish. It could hardly be pleasant to her to look forward to his being made a junior lord or an assistant secretary before she could establish herself in her home. So he told himself. And yet he told himself at the same time that it was incumbent on him to persevere.

"I did not expect you in the least," said Lady Laura.

"And yet I spoke very positively."

"But there are things as to which a man may be very positive, and yet may be allowed to fail. In the first place, how on earth did you get home?"

"Mr. Kennedy got me a pony,—Donald Bean's pony."

"You told him, then?"

"Yes; I told him why I was coming, and that I must be here. Then he took the trouble to come all the way off the mountain to

persuade Donald to lend me his pony. I must acknowledge that Mr. Kennedy has conquered me at last."

"I'm so glad of that," said Lady Laura. "I knew he would,—unless it were your own fault."

Then they went up the path by the brook, from bridge to bridge, till they found themselves out upon the open mountain at the top. Phineas had resolved that he would not speak out his mind till he found himself on that spot; that then he would ask her to sit down, and that while she was so seated he would tell her everything. At the present moment he had on his head a Scotch cap with a grouse's feather in it, and he was dressed in a velvet shooting-jacket and dark knickerbockers; and was certainly, in this costume, as handsome a man as any woman would wish to see. And there was, too, a look of breeding about him which had come to him, no doubt, from the royal Finns of old, which ever served him in great stead. He was, indeed, only Phineas Finn, and was known by the world to be no more; but he looked as though he might have been anybody,—a royal Finn himself. And then he had that special grace of appearing to be altogether unconscious of his own personal advantages. And I think that in truth he was barely conscious of them; that he depended on them very little, if at all; that there was nothing of personal vanity in his composition. He had never indulged in any hope that Lady Laura would accept him because he was a handsome man.

"After all that climbing," he said, "will you not sit down for a moment?" As he spoke to her she looked at him and told herself that he was as handsome as a god. "Do sit down for one moment," he said. "I have something that I desire to say to you, and to say it here."

"I will," she said; "but I also have something to tell you, and will say it while I am yet standing. Yesterday I accepted an offer of marriage from Mr. Kennedy."

"Then I am too late," said Phineas, and putting his hands into the pockets of his coat, he turned his back upon her, and walked away across the mountain.

What a fool he had been to let her know his secret when her knowledge of it could be of no service to him,—when her knowledge of it could only make him appear foolish in her eyes! But for his life he could not have kept his secret to himself. Nor now could he bring himself to utter a word of even decent civility. But he went on walking as though he could thus leave her there, and never see her again. What an ass he had been in supposing that she cared for him! What a fool to imagine that his poverty could stand a chance against the wealth of Loughlinter! But why had she lured him on? How he wished that he were now grinding, hard at work in Mr. Low's chambers, or sitting at home at Killaloe with the hand of that pretty little Irish girl within his own!

Presently he heard a voice behind him,—calling him gently. Then he turned and found that she was very near him. He himself had then been standing still for some moments, and she had followed him. "Mr. Finn," she said.

"Well;—yes: what is it?" And turning round he made an attempt to smile.

"Will you not wish me joy, or say a word of congratulation? Had I not thought much of your friendship, I should not have been so quick to tell you of my destiny. No one else has been told, except papa."

"Of course I hope you will be happy. Of course I do. No wonder he lent me the pony!"

"You must forget all that."

"Forget what?"

"Well,—nothing. You need forget nothing," said Lady Laura, "for nothing has been said that need be regretted. Only wish me joy, and all will be pleasant."

"Lady Laura, I do wish you joy, with all my heart;—but that will not make all things pleasant. I came up here to ask you to be my wife."

"No;—no, no; do not say it."

"But I have said it, and will say it again. I, poor, penniless, plain simple fool that I am, have been ass enough to love you, Lady Laura Standish; and I brought you up here to-day to ask you to share with me—my nothingness. And this I have done on soil that is to be all your own. Tell me that you regard me as a conceited fool,—as a bewildered idiot."

"I wish to regard you as a dear friend,—both of my own and of my husband," said she, offering him her hand.

"Should I have had a chance, I wonder, if I had spoken a week since?"

"How can I answer such a question, Mr. Finn? Or, rather, I will answer it fully. It is not a week since we told each other, you to me and I to you, that we were both poor,—both without other means than those which come to us from our fathers. You will make your way;—will make it surely; but how at present could you marry any woman unless she had money of her own? For me,—like so many other girls, it was necessary that I should stay at home or marry some one rich enough to dispense with fortune in a wife. The man whom in all the world I think the best has asked me to share everything with him;—and I have thought it wise to accept his offer."

"And I was fool enough to think that you loved me," said Phineas. To this she made no immediate answer. "Yes, I was. I feel that I owe it you to tell you what a fool I have been. I did. I thought you loved me. At least I thought that perhaps you loved me. It was like a child wanting the moon;—was it not?"

"And why should I not have loved you?" she said slowly, laying her hand gently upon his arm.

"Why not? Because Loughlinter——"

"Stop, Mr. Finn; stop. Do not say to me any unkind word that I have not deserved, and that would make a breach between us. I have accepted the owner of Loughlinter as my husband, because I verily believe that I shall thus best do my duty in that sphere of life to which it has pleased God to call me. I have always liked him, and I will love him. For you,—may I trust myself to speak openly to you?"

"You may trust me as against all others, except us two ourselves."

"For you, then, I will say also that I have always liked you since I knew you; that I have loved you as a friend;—and could have loved you otherwise had not circumstances showed me so plainly that it would be unwise."

"Oh, Lady Laura!"

"Listen a moment. And pray remember that what I say to you now must never be repeated to any ears. No one knows it but my father, my brother, and Mr. Kennedy. Early in the spring I paid my brother's debts. His affection to me is more than a return for what I have done for him. But when I did this,—when I made up my mind to do it, I made up my mind also that I could not allow myself the same freedom of choice which would otherwise have belonged to me. Will that be sufficient, Mr. Finn?"

"How can I answer you, Lady Laura? Sufficient! And you are not angry with me for what I have said?"

"No, I am not angry. But it is understood, of course, that nothing of this shall ever be repeated,—even among ourselves. Is that a bargain?"

"Oh, yes. I shall never speak of it again."

"And now you will wish me joy?"

"I have wished you joy, Lady Laura. And I will do so again. May you have every blessing which the world can give you. You cannot expect me to be very jovial for awhile myself; but there will be nobody to see my melancholy moods. I shall be hiding myself away in Ireland. When is the marriage to be?"

"Nothing has been said of that. I shall be guided by him,—but there must, of course, be delay. There will be settlements and I know not what. It may probably be in the spring,—or perhaps the summer. I shall do just what my betters tell me to do."

Phineas had now seated himself on the exact stone on which he had wished her to sit when he proposed to tell his own story, and was looking forth upon the lake. It seemed to him that everything had been changed for him while he had been up there upon the mountain, and that the change had been marvellous in its nature. When he had

been coming up, there had been apparently two alternatives before him: the glory of successful love,—which, indeed, had seemed to him to be a most improbable result of the coming interview,—and the despair and utter banishment attendant on disdainful rejection. But his position was far removed from either of these alternatives. She had almost told him that she would have loved him had she not been poor,—that she was beginning to love him and had quenched her love, because it had become impossible to her to marry a poor man. In such circumstances he could not be angry with her,—he could not quarrel with her; he could not do other than swear to himself that he would be her friend. And yet he loved her better than ever;—and she was the promised wife of his rival! Why had not Donald Bean's pony broken his neck?

"Shall we go down now?" she said.

"Oh, yes."

"You will not go on by the lake?"

"What is the use? It is all the same now. You will want to be back to receive him in from shooting."

"Not that, I think. He is above those little cares. But it will be as well we should go the nearest way, as we have spent so much of our time here. I shall tell Mr. Kennedy that I have told you,—if you do not mind."

"Tell him what you please," said Phineas.

"But I won't have it taken in that way, Mr. Finn. Your brusque want of courtesy to me I have forgiven, but I shall expect you to make up for it by the alacrity of your congratulations to him. I will not have you uncourteous to Mr. Kennedy."

"If I have been uncourteous I beg your pardon."

"You need not do that. We are old friends, and may take the liberty of speaking plainly to each other;—but you will owe it to Mr. Kennedy to be gracious. Think of the pony."

They walked back to the house together, and as they went down the path very little was said. Just as they were about to come out upon the open lawn, while they were still under cover of the rocks and shrubs, Phineas stopped his companion by standing before her, and then he made his farewell speech to her.

"I must say good-bye to you. I shall be away early in the morning."

"Good-bye, and God bless you," said Lady Laura.

"Give me your hand," said he. And she gave him her hand. "I don't suppose you know what it is to love dearly."

"I hope I do."

"But to be in love! I believe you do not. And to miss your love! I think,—I am bound to think that you have never been so tormented. It is very sore;—but I will do my best, like a man, to get over it."

"Do, my friend, do. So small a trouble will never weigh heavily on shoulders such as yours."

"It will weigh very heavily, but I will struggle hard that it may not crush me. I have loved you so dearly! As we are parting, give me one kiss, that I may think of it and treasure it in my memory?" What murmuring words she spoke to express her refusal of such a request, I will not quote; but the kiss had been taken before the denial was completed, and then they walked on in silence together,—and in peace, towards the house.

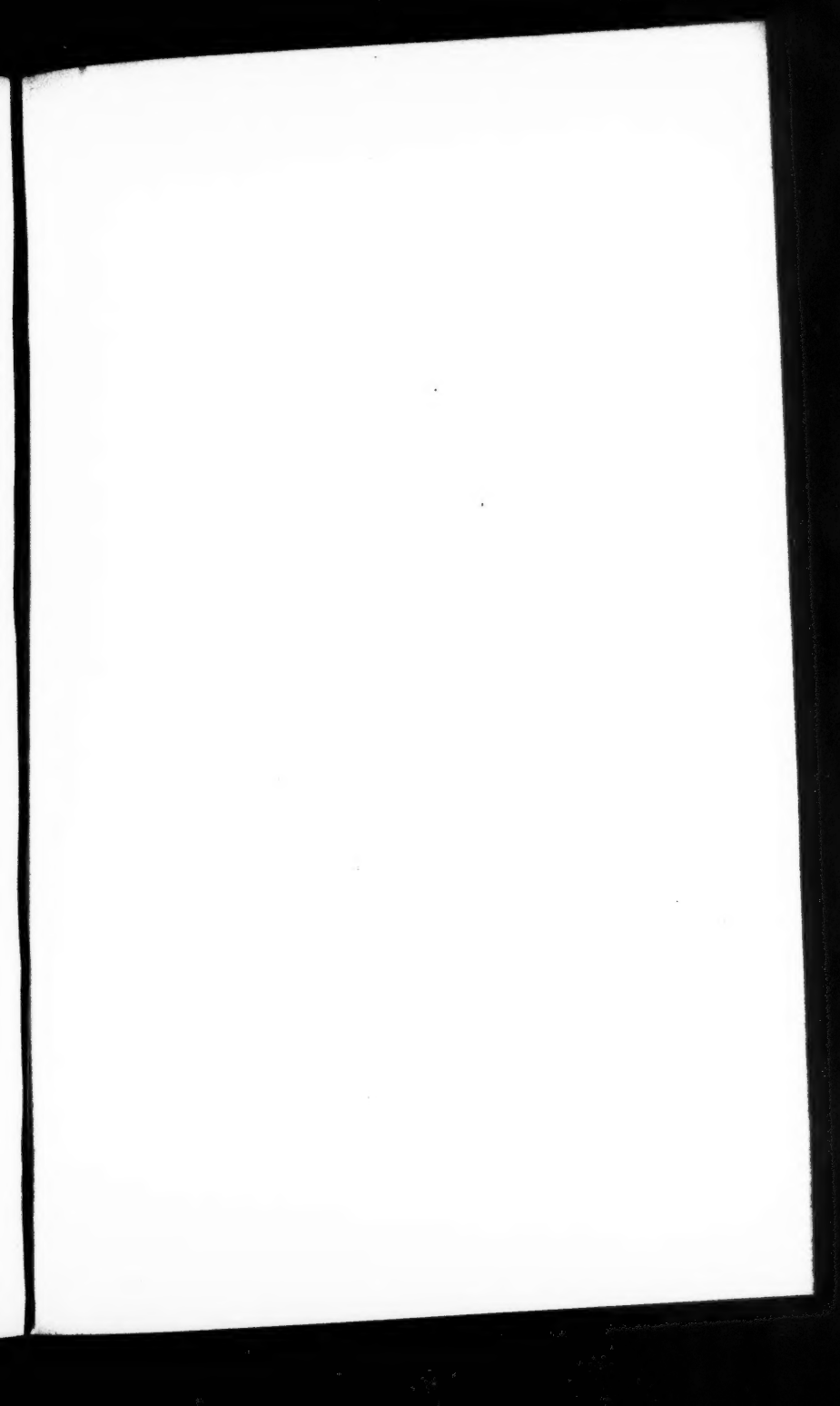
On the next morning six or seven men were going away, and there was an early breakfast. There were none of the ladies there, but Mr. Kennedy, the host, was among his friends. A large drag with four horses was there to take the travellers and their luggage to the station, and there was naturally a good deal of noise at the front door as the preparations for the departure were made. In the middle of them Mr. Kennedy took our hero aside. "Laura has told me," said Mr. Kennedy, "that she has acquainted you with my good fortune."

"And I congratulate you most heartily," said Phineas, grasping the other's hand. "You are indeed a lucky fellow."

"I feel myself to be so," said Mr. Kennedy. "Such a wife was all that was wanting to me, and such a wife is very hard to find. Will you remember, Finn, that Loughlinter will never be so full but what there will be a room for you, or so empty but what you will be made welcome. I say this on Lady Laura's part, and on my own."

Phineas, as he was being carried away to the railway station, could not keep himself from speculating as to how much Kennedy knew of what had taken place during the walk up the Linter. Of one small circumstance that had occurred, he felt quite sure that Mr. Kennedy knew nothing.

---





"Laura, would you mind leaving me and Miss Effingham alone for a few minutes?"

*Phineas Finn.* Chap. xix. Page 621.